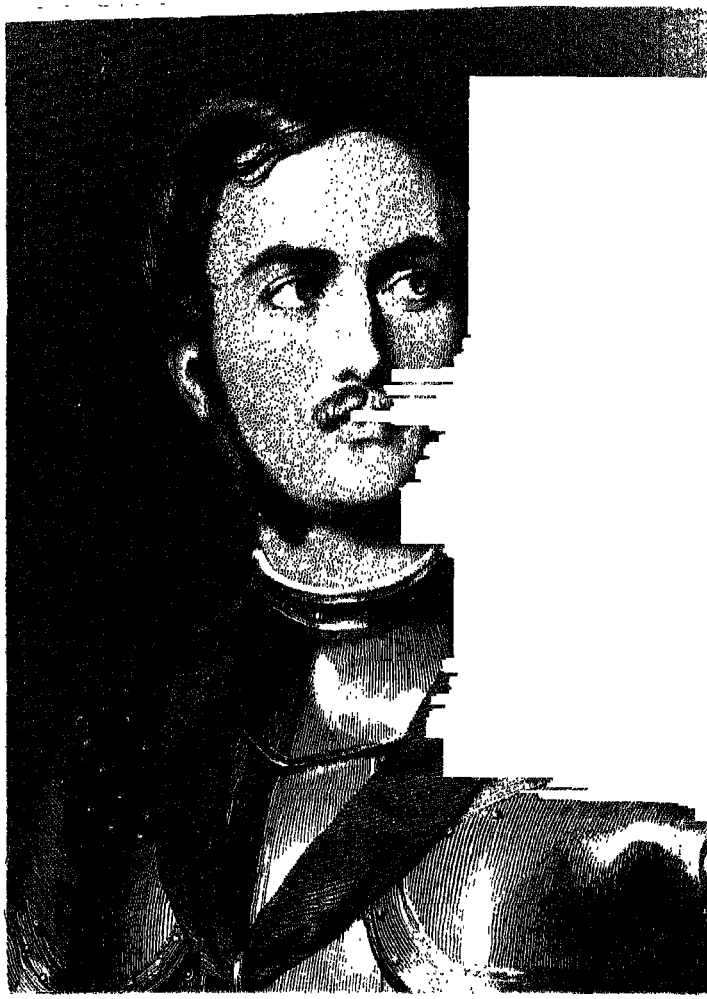
THE LIFE

OF

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT

VOL. I.



THE LIFE

OF

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT

BY

THEODORE MARTIN

WITH PORTRAITS AND VIEWS

VOLUME THE FIRST

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE
1875

[*All rights reserved*]

TO

THE QUEEN'S

MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

MADAM,

I have now the satisfaction of placing in Your Majesty's hands the first portion of the narrative of the Life of the Prince Consort, which I have had the honour to prepare in compliance with Your Majesty's desire. In doing so, may I be permitted to say a few words in explanation of the principles by which I have been guided in its composition?

Your Majesty is aware of the extreme diffidence—I might even say reluctance—with which I accepted the honourable task, most unexpectedly pressed upon me, of continuing the Life of the Prince which had been begun by General Grey. To me, biography, while one of the most fascinating, has always appeared one of the most difficult branches of literature. How difficult, the few masterpieces in that kind, of either ancient or modern time, are enough to show. To present a faithful picture of even the simplest life and character, moving in scenes with which we are ourselves familiar, working in channels in which we have ourselves worked, demands rare qualities of imaginative sympathy and perception. A life of action, which has swayed great movements or stamped its impress upon great events, may

be presented in strong outlines, and under such forcible contrasts of light and shade, as will stimulate the imagination, and make the hero or the statesman a vivid reality for the reader. But where the inner life has to be portrayed, a subtler touch is demanded. We are a mystery to ourselves; how much more, then, must we be a mystery to a stranger? There is infinite sacredness in all noble lives, such as alone merit the consecration of biography. Before it those will bow with the greatest reverence to whom these lives are most intimately known; for to such the fact is sure to have been brought most closely home, which Keble has beautifully expressed, that—

> Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
> Knows half the reason why we smile or sigh.

How grave, then, must be his responsibility who ventures to draw for the world a portrait of any of its heroes, which shall be at once warmly sympathetic and austerely just!

Such, and no less, I felt the portrait of the Prince Consort ought to be. But who might paint it? I had not the happiness or the honour to know him personally; but it was apparent at a glance that there must be unusual difficulty in dealing with a life consecrated to duty as his had been, and marked by that 'silent, collected posture' to which he was restricted by the peculiar circumstances of his position. Of much that the Prince had done for England no further record was needed. It lived in the institutions he had encouraged, in the impulses he had given to social improvement, the force of which continues to be daily felt. Of his influence both on domestic and European politics much was surmised. It was difficult to compute how much could be fully told, while events were yet recent, and many of the actors in them still alive. Of the man, as he was known in his home and among his friends, the charming glimpses,

which had been vouchsafed in *The Leaves from a Journal*, and in General Grey's volume, seemed to leave little that could be added to the picture.

It was natural, therefore, that I should shrink from a task which, it seemed, might have more fitly devolved on some one who could have brought to it the advantages of intimate personal knowledge of the Prince, and familiarity with the social and political history of the time. I could not have anticipated how many of the difficulties of my task would be smoothed away by the generous frankness with which Your Majesty placed at my disposal the amplest materials for its accomplishment. Nothing, however confidential, has been withheld which could reflect a light upon the Prince's character, or enable me to present him in his true colours before the world. The time has not yet come when the fullest use of these materials can be made; but, when it does come, this much is certain,—

> Whatever record leaps to light,
> He never shall be shamed.

I have had no panegyric to write. This would have been distasteful to Your Majesty, as it would be unworthy of the Prince. My aim has been to let his words and his deeds speak to others as they have spoken to myself. In doing this I have had to speak much and often of Your Majesty; with whom his life was so inseparably interwoven that, without the reflected light thus cast upon the Prince, the picture would lose many of its tenderest and most penetrating touches.

Merely to have continued the sketch embodied in General Grey's volume was soon found to be impossible. That volume, originally prepared with no eye to publication, had a distinctive character of its own. The life of the Prince, after the date to which General Grey had brought it down, entered so deeply into the social and political

history of the time, that it required to be treated on a wholly different scale. It seemed better, therefore, that the present work should be complete within itself. Accordingly, it resumes the narrative of the Prince's early years. But this has been enriched by several most interesting documents entrusted to me by Your Majesty, which place some important points of the Prince's character in a fuller and, as I venture to think, a truer light.

In dealing with political events, I have done my best to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality. If, unfortunately, I have failed in doing so, and in profiting in this respect by the example of Your Majesty and the Prince, it cannot be too clearly understood, that the responsibility for such opinions on public events as may be expressed in this work rests entirely with myself.

You, Madam, can alone truly know how far I may have succeeded in placing before the world a faithful portraiture of the Prince, whose irreparable loss is daily present to your heart. Much yet remains to be done to complete the picture. It is, however, in all its lineaments, vividly present to my mind. If only I can do justice to the materials before me, there will be no question in the days to come, that not without reason has England assigned to the 'father of her kings to be' a foremost place among those whom she delights to hold in reverent remembrance.

I have the honour to be,

MADAM,

Your Majesty's most devoted

Subject and Servant,

THEODORE MARTIN.

BRYNTYSILIO: *20th October*, 1874.

CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

1819–36.

PAGE

Early Years of Prince's Life 1

CHAPTER II.

1820–1839.

Birth and Education of the Princess Victoria—Baron Stockmar—First Visit of Prince to England—Plans for completing his Education—Course of his Studies at Brussels and Bonn—Accession of Princess Victoria—Prince's Tour in Switzerland—Project of Marriage between Prince and Queen Victoria—Prince and his Brother—Prince Visits Italy—Returns to Coburg 12

CHAPTER III.

1839.

Estimate by Baron Stockmar of the Prince's Character—State of Parties in England—Prince's Second Visit to England—Betrothal of Queen and Prince—Return of Prince to Germany—Letter by Prince Ernest of Saxe-Coburg to the Queen—Leave-takings at Coburg and Gotha . 33

CHAPTER IV.

1840.

PAGE

Announcement of Royal Marriage in England—Appointment of Prince's Household—How the Announcement of Royal Marriage received in England—Discussions as to the Prince's Annuity—And as to his Status and Right of Precedence—Arrival of the Prince in England—His Reception there—Marriage 53

CHAPTER V.

1840—*continued.*

The Position of the Prince in his Household—His Position with regard to Public Affairs—His Rules of Conduct—Sketch of Baron Stockmar, his Character and Influence—State of Public Affairs in England—Awkward Relations with France on the Eastern Question—State of Political Parties in England 69

CHAPTER VI.

1840—*continued.*

Impression produced in England by the Prince—The Prince as Musician and Artist—His First Public Speech—Oxford shoots at the Queen—Prince appointed Regent—Question as to Prince's Right of Precedence at Opening Parliament—Prince's first Birthday Fête at Windsor Castle—The Eastern Question—Birth of Crown Princess—Her Baptism—Accident to the Prince 84

CHAPTER VII.

1841.

Difficulties and Approaching Downfall of Melbourne Administration—Arrangements in anticipation of Change of Ministry—Baron Stockmar on the State of Parties and Aspect of Affairs in England—Royal Visits to Nuneham, Oxford, Woburn Abbey, Panshanger, Brocket Hall, and Hatfield—Launch of the Trafalgar—Elections for City of London—Fall of Melbourne Administration—Lord Melbourne's opinion of the Prince—The Peel Ministry—Sir R. Peel's and Lord Kingsdown's estimate of the Prince—Fine Arts Commission—Prince appointed President—Report by Mr. Charles Eastlake of interview with Prince—Birth of Prince of Wales—Christmas at Windsor Castle . . . 109

CHAPTER VIII.

1842.

PAGE

The King of Prussia's Arrival in England—Acts as Sponsor to Prince of Wales—Attends opening of Parliament by Queen—Betrothal and Marriage of Prince's Brother—Uneasy State of Public Affairs—Sir Robert Peel's Financial Measures—Income Tax—Disasters in India—Queen shot at by Francis—Francis's Sentence of Death commuted to Transportation for Life—Next Day Queen fired at by Bean—Death of Duke of Orleans—Disturbed State of the Country—The Queen's First Visit to Scotland—Impressions of Scotland—Indian Victories—Prince applies himself to Study of Politics—Continues to rise in Public Estimation—His Rules of Conduct as described by General Grey—Necessity for Re-organisation of Royal Household . 128

CHAPTER IX.

1843.

Re-organisation of Royal Household undertaken by Prince—Opening of Parliament—Assassination of Mr. Drummond—Sir Robert Peel—Development of Prince's Character—Birth of Princess Alice—Exhibition of Cartoons for Frescoes in Westminster Hall—Queen and Prince encourage Fresco Painting by Commissions for Decoration of Pavilion at Buckingham Palace—Efforts by Prince to suppress Duelling . 156

CHAPTER X.

1843.

Royal Visit to the King of the French at the Château d'Eu—Royal Visit to Belgium and to Cambridge—Alarming state of Ireland—Arrest and Trial of O'Connell—Prince visits Birmingham—Royal Visits to Drayton Manor, Chatsworth, and Belvoir Castle—Good Effects of Visit to France 173

CHAPTER XI.

1844.

Death of Prince's Father—Prince goes to Coburg—Letters to the Queen—Return to Windsor Castle—Arrival of King of Saxony and Emperor of Russia on Visit to the Queen—Opinions of Emperor on Political Questions—Account of Emperor's Visit by the Queen . . . 200

CHAPTER XII.

1844—*continued.*

PAGE

Ministerial Crisis—Birth of Prince Alfred—Threatened Disturbance of Relations with France—Visit of Prince of Prussia—Second Visit to Scotland—Visit of the King of the French 226

CHAPTER XIII.

1844-5.

Osborne purchased and laid out by Prince—Royal Visit to Stowe and Strathfieldsaye—Opening of Parliament—Changes in Ministry—Peel's Financial Measures—Civil List—Discussions as to Title of King Consort—Sir Robert Peel—Maynooth Bill—Sir Robert Peel declines offer of the Garter—His anticipations of a Ministerial Crisis—Queen's intended Visit to Ireland postponed 216

CHAPTER XIV.

1845—*continued.*

Queen's Visit to Germany—Second Visit to the Château d'Eu . . 272

CHAPTER XV.

1845-6.

Troubled State of Affairs in England—Lord John Russell's Edinburgh Letter—Sir R. Peel resigns—Lord John Russell fails in forming an Administration—Sir R. Peel's return to Office—His adoption of a Free Trade Policy—Prince attends Debate in House of Commons—Holiday Gardening—Landscape Gardening—Carriage of Corn Bill—Defeat of Ministry on Irish Coercion Bill—Their Resignation 306

CHAPTER XVI.

1846—*continued.*

Settlement of Oregon Question—The New Ministry—Birth of Princess Helena—Prince's Visit to Liverpool—Distress in Ireland—Remedial Measures—New House at Osborne 320

CHAPTER XVII.

1846—*continued.*

PAGE
The Spanish Marriages 341

CHAPTER XVIII.

1846-7.

Consequences of the Spanish Marriages—Annexation of Cracow—Alarming Political Symptoms in Europe—Ripening of the Character of the Prince—His Election as Chancellor of University of Cambridge—Letter of the Poet Wordsworth—His Installation Ode—Royal Visit to Cambridge—Installation of Prince as Chancellor 374

CHAPTER XIX.

1847.

Revolutionary Symptoms throughout Europe—Commercial Distress in England—Great Distress in Ireland—Opening of Parliament and Queen's Speech—Lord George Bentinck's Scheme in aid of Irish Railways—Reforms in Germany—Character of King of Prussia by the Prince—Death of O'Connell—English Intervention in Affairs of Portugal—Discussions in Parliament—Dissolution—Royal Voyage to Scotland described by Prince 400

CHAPTER XX.

1847—*continued.*

Stay at Ardverikie—Prince's Birthday—Active Political Studies—Unsettled aspect of European affairs—State of Italy—Proposal to send Lord Minto to Rome and the Italian States—Memorandum by Prince on the subject—Letter by him to Lord John Russell—Letter by Baron Stockmar—Life at Ardverikie 424

CHAPTER XXI.

1847—*continued.*

Memorandum by Prince on the State of Affairs in Germany—Views of Lord Palmerston on same subject—Correspondence between Baron Stockmar and the Prince in regard to the movement for reform and unity in Germany 438

CHAPTER XXII.

1847–8.

PAGE

Great Commercial and Financial Distress in England and Scotland—Alarming increase of crime in Ireland—Measures of Repression—Disturbed State of Affairs in Switzerland, Italy, and France—Critical condition of France—Correspondence between Prince and Baron Stockmar—The Hampden Controversy—Insurrection in Sicily—Progress of Liberal Movement in Italy—Death of Dowager Duchess of Gotha—Revolution in Paris—Flight of King Louis Philippe and his family to England—Birth of Princess Louise 459

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

Memorandum as to the Influence of H.R.H. the Prince Consort upon Musical Taste in England 485

List of the printed Musical Works of H.R.H. the Prince Consort . . 492

List of Music selected by the Prince for performance at the Antient Concerts, at which he presided as Director 494

List of Music selected by the Prince for performance at the Concerts of the Philharmonic Society 499

APPENDIX B.

Royal Correspondence on the subject of the Spanish Marriages . . 502

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PORTRAIT OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE CONSORT AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-FOUR, AFTER THORBURN . . . . . *to face Title*

PORTRAIT OF H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT AT THE AGE OF FOUR „ *p.* 4

VIEW OF THE ROSENAU: BIRTHPLACE OF THE PRINCE . . „ 285

VIEW OF REINHARDTSBRUNN . . . . . „ 294

PORTRAIT OF BARON STOCKMAR . . . . . „ 408

THE LIFE

OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE CONSORT.

CHAPTER I.

Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel—the future Albert, Prince Consort of England—was the second son of Ernest, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and of his wife, Louise, daughter of Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. He was born at the Rosenau, a summer residence of his father's, about four miles from Coburg, on the 26th of August, 1819. His elder and only brother, Ernest, now Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, was born on the 21st of June in the previous year. The names of the young Princes, who were the only children of the marriage, were of traditional interest in the family, being those of the two sons of Frederick, Elector of Saxony, surnamed the Gentle, who were the founders of the Albertine and Ernestine branches into which the Saxon family has since their time been divided.[1]

Died 1464.

Ernest died 26th August, 1486; Albert, 12th September, 1500.

Three months previous to the birth of Prince Albert, an event had occurred which was destined to exercise a supreme influence on his future career. At Kensington Palace on the

[1] Frederick's sons were, on the night of the 8th July, 1455, carried off from the Castle of Altenburg by their father's chamberlain, Kunz of Kaufungen, in revenge for having been compelled by Frederick to make restitution of some lands, with which he had been invested for a time, on condition that he should

24th of May, 1819, the Duchess of Kent, sister of the Prince's father, gave birth to the Princess, now Queen, Victoria. It has been noted as a remarkable coincidence, that the same accoucheuse, Madame Siebold, assisted on both occasions, and that the Prince was baptized by the clergyman, Professor Genzler, who had the year before officiated at the marriage of the Duke and Duchess of Kent. Thus it happens, that the mother of the Duchess, in announcing to her the birth of the Prince, who already (27th August, 1819) 'looks about like a little squirrel, with a pair of large blue eyes,' was able to speak with fond anticipation of what 'the May-Flower' of Kensington—'a dear little love' whom 'Siebold cannot sufficiently describe'—will be in a year's time, when the happy grandmother hopes to see it (*Early Years*, pp. 10, 11).

Both the young Princes were distinguished by their precocity. The beauty, gentleness, and vivacity of Albert seem, however, to have made him the greater favourite, especially with his mother. As a child his beauty was remarkable. While yet only eight months old his mother writes, 'Albert est superbe, d'une beauté extraordinaire.' Two years later (11th July, 1821) the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, in

restore them when reinstated, as he had been, in possession of his own estates, of which he had some years previously been despoiled. Kunz was pursued and overtaken with three of his accomplices, on his way to Bohemia with Albert. The rest of his party, six in number, who had carried off Ernest by a different route, hearing of his capture, surrendered some days afterwards, on condition that their lives should be spared. Kunz himself and those who were taken with him were executed. On 16th March, 1823, the Duchess Dowager of Coburg writes: 'Ernest's boys have got a picture-book. One of the pictures represents the carrying-off of the Saxon princes. This interests them greatly, and Albert makes wonderful eyes in telling that one was called Albert, like himself.'—*Early Years*, p. 23. His namesake Albert had nearly escaped. Wilhelm von Mosen, one of Kunz's band, had been told off to secure him, but mistook for him a young Graf von Barby, who was sleeping in the same room with the princes. Kunz discovered the mistake when the boy was brought out of the castle, rushed back to the room, and dragged off the young Albert, who had crept under the bed for safety. The story of this 'Prinzenraub,' conceived and executed as it was with a skill and daring remarkable even for those unscrupulous times, was well calculated to impress the boyish imagination.

writing to the Duchess of Kent, says of him, 'Little Alberinchen, with his large blue eyes and dimpled cheeks, is bewitching, forward and quick as a weasel. He can already say everything. Ernest is not nearly as pretty, only his intelligent brown eyes are very fine; but he is tall, active, and very clever for his age.' And again (11th August, 1821): 'The little fellow is the pendant to the pretty cousin' (the Princess Victoria), 'very handsome, but too slight for a boy; lively, very funny, all good nature, and full of mischief.'

It was at this time that the young Princes became known to their uncle, Prince Leopold, who had left England after the coronation of George IV. in 1820, for the first time since the death of the Princess Charlotte. 'Albert,' his mother writes, 'adore son oncle Léopold, ne le quitte pas un instant, lui fait des yeux doux, l'embrasse à chaque moment, et ne se sent pas d'aise que lorsqu'il peut être auprès de lui.' The attraction was reciprocal, and deepened with advancing years.

Prince Leopold's object in visiting Coburg was to arrange a residence for his mother, the Dowager Duchess, for the ensuing winter in Italy. Beloved by all her children, she was especially beloved by Leopold, who, on the other hand, was her chief favourite. 'She was a woman,' writes King Leopold, 'in every respect distinguished; warm-hearted, possessing a most powerful understanding, and she loved her grandchildren most tenderly.' Her husband, a man of 'the most amiable and humane character—benevolence itself, had been remarkable for his great love and knowledge of the fine arts.' While Prince Albert was considered by King Leopold to have inherited these qualities—'no one else in the family possessing them to the same degree'—some of the Prince's leading physical peculiarities appear to have been derived from the Duchess, who 'had fine and most expressive blue eyes, with the marked features and

long nose inherited by most of her children and grandchildren' (Mem. by the Queen, *Early Years*, p. 18).

The young Princes were objects of scarcely less interest and affection to their maternal step-grandmother, the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, second wife of Duke Augustus, father by his first wife of the Duchess of Coburg—a woman in whom a naturally kind heart was combined with strong sense and thorough goodness and amiability. 'Indeed their two grandmothers seemed to vie with each other, which should show them the most love and kindness' (*Early Years*, p. 20). They were always eager to have the boys with them, when they might. Accordingly, in the spring of 1822, the parents of the young Princes having left Coburg for a time, while the Dowager Duchess of Coburg was absent in Italy, the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha begged that they might be entrusted to her care. The wish was granted, and when they returned home, after a few weeks' stay with her, it cost her no small regret to part with them. On their return to Coburg, the Dowager Duchess, jealous of her favourites, welcomed them with delight. 'Yesterday morning,' she writes (27th June, 1822), 'my dear little boys came back from Gotha, and I was overjoyed. Ernest is very much grown. . . Albert is very much smaller than his brother, and lovely as a little angel with his fair curls.' The contemporary portrait by Döll[2] is sufficient proof that this was not the ordinary exaggeration of a grandmother's fondness. A few months later the Duchess reports of her young favourites: 'They are very good boys on the whole, very obedient, and easy to manage. Albert used to rebel a little sometimes, but a grave face brings the little fellow to submit. Now he obeys me with a look.' The riotous spirits of two children of so much character appear, how-

[2] Engraved originally in the *Early Years*, and now reproduced as an illustration to this volume.



ever, to have become somewhat oppressive to the kind old lady. 'The boys are very wild,' she writes a few months afterwards, 'and Ernest flies about like a swallow.' They are to be placed under the care of a tutor, of which she is glad. Not so, however, the maternal grandmother at Gotha. She heard with alarm of the transfer of such young children, the one under five and the other under four, and both in some respects delicate, from the care of their nurse to that of a man, who could scarcely be expected to know so well how to look after their childish ailments.

Young as he was, so young that he was very willing to let his tutor carry him up and down stairs, the Prince was delighted with the change; having even as a child shown a great dislike to be in the charge of women. The tutor was a M. Florschutz of Coburg, and he superintended the education of both the Princes up to manhood through all its stages. The admirable qualities of his pupils made his duties a pleasure. To the younger Prince he was especially attracted from the first. 'Every grace,' he writes, 'had been showered by nature on this charming boy. Every eye rested on him with delight, and his look won the hearts of all.' Like his mother in person, and resembling her also in quickness, vivacity, and playfulness, he was her favourite child; and she made no secret of a preference, which might in ordinary circumstances have been mischievous to the boy, and disturbed the affection between his brother and himself. But this distracting influence was not to be long at work. In 1824 a separation was arranged between the Duke and Duchess (followed by a divorce in 1826), but not before she had established a hold upon the affections of her children which, although they never saw her again, remained with them to the last.[3] All that could be done to compensate the

[3] She died at St. Wendel, in Switzerland, in 1831, at the age of thirty-two, after a long and painful illness. She was not only beautiful, but exercised a

loss of a mother's presence and care was done by the grandmothers of the Princes, who continued to watch over them with a twofold tenderness, and had the happiness of seeing them grow up in the bonds of closest attachment, brightening from year to year in intelligence and knowledge, and, while they grew in strength and comeliness, retaining that freshness of heart and warmth of feeling, which a simple and happy home life, such as theirs, is best calculated to develope.

From a very early age the Prince's thoughtfulness and love for knowledge were remarkable. He learned quickly, and he was always learning. 'To do something was with him a necessity' (*Early Years*, p. 28). The energy with which he pursued his studies was carried into his childish sports; and although in childhood he was rather a delicate boy, the force of his character even then made itself felt with his brother and their childish companions, who yielded to a sway, which he was not indisposed to claim, and upon occasion to enforce by the vigour of his arm. This strength of will, which rested on superior earnestness and depth, naturally showed itself more decidedly as he advanced into boyhood; but it was not inconsistent with a prevailing gentleness and benevolence of disposition.

'It was only what he thought unjust or dishonest,' writes Count Arthur Mensdorff (*Early Years*, p. 57), 'that could

great charm through her intelligence and kindness of heart. Full of *espièglerie*, and with a habit of viewing men and things in a droll and humorous way—characteristics in which the Prince strongly resembled her—she was a general favourite. But her marriage, which commenced under the fairest auspices, proved unhappy. 'The Prince,' says the Queen (*Early Years*, p. 8), 'never forgot her, and spoke with much tenderness and sorrow of his poor mother, and was deeply affected in reading, after his marriage, the accounts of her sad and painful illness. One of the first gifts he made to the Queen was a little pin he had received from her when a little child. Princess Louise (the Prince's fourth daughter, and named after her grandmother) is said to be like her in face.' This likeness is strikingly apparent in a portrait prefixed to an interesting description of the ceremonies upon the occasion of her marriage, published at Coburg in 1817.

make him angry. Thus I recollect one day when we children, Albert, Ernest, Ferdinand, Augustus, Alexander, myself, and a few other boys, were playing at the Rosenau, and some of us were to storm the old ruined tower on the side of the castle, which the others were to defend, one of us suggested that there was a place at the back by which we could get in without being seen, and thus capture it without difficulty. Albert declared that "this would be most unbecoming in a Saxon knight, who should always attack the enemy in front," and so we fought for the tower so honestly and vigorously that Albert, by mistake, for I was on his side, gave me a blow upon the nose, of which I still bear the mark. I need not say how sorry he was for the wound he had given me.'

Two other qualities, in which the child was father of the man, are mentioned by his tutor: his eager desire to do good and to assist others, and the grateful feeling, which never allowed him to forget an act of kindness, however trifling, to himself. The sweetness of his nature showed itself conspicuously during the attacks of illness to which he was subject up to the age of ten. 'His heart seemed then to open to the whole world. He would form the most noble projects for execution after his recovery—and, though apparently not satisfied with himself, he displayed a temper and disposition, in thought and deed, perfectly angelic' (*Early Years*, p. 106). Another characteristic of the boy, as it was of the man, is also recorded by his cousin, Count Arthur Mensdorff: a 'perfect moral purity, both in word and deed,' to which his admirable sweetness of disposition was mainly owing. Like all healthy, purely-minded boys, he was cheerful and joyous in his turn of thought, and in the way he looked at life and men. Combined with a keen sense of the ludicrous, he possessed a great talent for humorous imitation, which, however, he exercised in the

kindliest way, never using the power to excite ridicule or contempt for its objects.

The education of the Princes was of the broad general character best suited to their position. It included history, geography, mathematics, philosophy, religion, Latin, and the modern European languages, relieved by the study of music and drawing, for both of which the Prince early showed a marked inclination. He was also from childhood fond of natural history. In the researches to which this led he developed the habit of exact observation for which, in later life, he was pre-eminently distinguished. His tastes, in this respect, were fully shared by his brother; and their boyish collections formed the nucleus of the excellent 'Ernest-Albert Museum' of natural objects, now deposited in the Festung at Coburg. Long years afterwards the sight of his old collections in their new home brought back a flood of remembrances to the Prince with a force and freshness which can be only known by the student, to whom every object in his collection has an interest, not merely from local or personal association, but because it marks a step in the 'pleasant path that winds by stealth' to knowledge. 'I went to-day,' he writes to the Queen (30th May, 1858), 'to the Museum, where I once more paid my respects to all the birds, butterflies, stones, and shells, and called to mind every circumstance connected with their acquisition.'

The free open-air life led by the boys at the various country residences of their father—the Rosenau, Kalenberg, and Ketschendorf, near Coburg, and Reinhardtsbrunnen, near Gotha[4]—was peculiarly favourable to such studies. Situ-

[4] Duke Augustus of Saalfeld-Gotha, the Prince's maternal grandfather, died in 1822. He was succeeded by his brother Duke Frederick, on whose death, in 1836, without issue, his possessions were divided under a family arrangement, by which Gotha was assigned to the Duke of Coburg, who thenceforth took the name of Coburg-Gotha. Reinhardtsbrunnen, beautifully placed about eight miles from Gotha on the outskirts of the Thuringian forest, formed part of the Duchy.

ated as these are, especially the first and last, amid scenery wild, yet not too wild, and rich in the charm which steals into the heart from the combination of wood, water, and mountain, with all their variety of life and colour and sound, they could scarcely fail to awaken in a nature so finely organised that deep delight in whatever was beautiful and grand in scenery, and to cultivate that quick eye for all its subtlety of detail, which were a source of infinite solace and enjoyment to the Prince amid the fatigues of his after life. 'Nothing could exceed the intense enjoyment with which a fine or commanding view inspired the young Prince' (*Early Years*, p. 108). For such a mind every spot teems with the associations that make the haunts of youth doubly dear. To him they were 'the home,' to which the heart could not do otherwise than cling with all the tender reminiscences of a happy boyhood.

In a country where game abounds, and the sports of the field and forest are the prescriptive pastime of his class, it was natural that the Prince should be early taught to take his part in sporting expeditions. His father and brother followed them with the ardour of enthusiastic sportsmen. The Prince, though by no means indifferent to them, and an excellent shot, enjoyed them then, as he did in later life, chiefly for the sake of exercise,[5] for the pleasures of the scenery into which they carried him, and for the multitude of natural objects which they brought under his eye. They were, unquestionably, an excellent tonic, along with his other exercises, for the habits of close and systematic study, which even in boyhood he prescribed for himself, and conscientiously carried out, with the definite object, as he expressed it in a letter to his father so early as July 1830, of making him-

[5] 'I don't understand,' he would often say, 'people making a business of shooting, and going out for the whole day. I like it as an amusement for a few hours. *Die Leute hier* (in England) *wollen ein Geschäft daraus machen.*'

self 'a good and useful man.' Under this wholesome and well-regulated mixture of bodily with mental training, the delicacy of his childhood seems to have passed away, and he grew up into an active, cheerful, healthy boy.

In 1834 the time had arrived for the Confirmation of the Prince's brother, now in his seventeenth year. Unlike in person and in mind, the Princes were one in heart—and their affection was cemented by the profound esteem with which Ernest regarded the purity and 'incomparable superiority and firmness' of his brother's character. In this first solemn act of his life, it was thought desirable that the elder Prince should not be separated from him with whom he had hitherto gone hand in hand from childhood. Neither could the younger Prince's union with him in the public profession of their faith be regarded as premature, Albert's nature being, as expressed by his tutor, 'singularly earnest and thoughtful,' and indeed instinctively devout. Accordingly, on Palm Sunday, 1835, the young Princes were confirmed in the Chapel of the Palace at Coburg. During the preliminary public examination of the Princes, one of the answers of the Hereditary Prince created a marked impression. When asked by the examiner, whether he intended stedfastly to hold to the Evangelical Church, he did not confine himself to a simple 'Yes!' but added, 'I and my brother are firmly resolved ever to remain faithful to the acknowledged truth.' The unity of heart and mind between the brothers which prompted this reply could not be more strikingly shown.

Up to this time, with the exception of a short visit to their uncle, King Leopold, at Brussels in 1832, the Princes had not left home. They now went to Mecklenburg, to congratulate the Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, their great-grandfather by the mother's side, on the fiftieth anniversary of his accession, and after a few days spent there, they travelled on to Berlin. At both places they were well received,

and produced a most favourable impression. 'It requires, however,' writes the Prince from Berlin (9th May, 1835), to his stepmother the Duchess of Coburg,[6] 'a giant's strength to bear all the fatigue we have had to undergo. Visits, parades, rides, déjeuners, dinners, suppers, balls and concerts, follow each other in rapid succession, and we have not been allowed to miss any one of the festivities.' From Berlin the Princes made a tour to Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Pesth, and Ofen, returning towards the end of May to Coburg, where they once more settled down to their studies. At this period, the Prince appears to have taken up seriously the study of German literature and philosophy, as we find him, in February 1836, submitting for criticism to Dr. Seebode, Director of the Coburg Gymnasium, an essay *On the Mode of Thought of the Germans*, which had for its object to trace historically the progress of German civilisation, a subject not a little ambitious for a youth of sixteen. But we may be very sure from what we know of the conscientious habits of the Prince's mind, that he would not have approached it without having first gone through a series of careful preliminary studies.

A period had now arrived, which was to form a critical turning point in the Prince's life, and which it will be necessary to consider in some detail.

[6] The Prince's mother, as already mentioned, died in 1831. In the autumn of the following year, the Duke of Coburg married the Princess Mary of Wurtemberg.

CHAPTER II.

THE house of Coburg was intimately allied by marriage with the Royal family of England. In 1816 Prince Leopold, the youngest brother of Prince Albert's father, the Duke of Coburg, had married the Princess Charlotte, then presumptive heiress to the English throne. Soon after the death (5th November, 1817) of that Princess, in whom and in her admirable husband the country's hopes of a wise and exemplary reign had been centred, the Duke of Kent, then in his fifty-first year, married Victoire Maria Louise, Princess Leiningen, the youngest sister of the Duke of Coburg. Born on the 17th of August, 1786, she had married the Prince Emich Charles of Leiningen in 1803. His death in 1813 left her a widow with a son, Charles Emich, Prince Leiningen, and one daughter, Anna Feodora, afterwards by marriage Princess of Hohenlohe-Langenburg.[1] Still in the freshness of youth and beauty, she presented the Duke of Kent, on the 24th of May, 1819, with a daughter; and although the marriage of his elder brother, the Duke of Clarence, on the same day with himself, interposed the possibility of a very different event, and for many years, indeed, left the succession doubtful, the Duke of Kent was in the habit of showing the infant Princess to his friends and intimates with the words, 'Look at her well, for she will be Queen of England.'

11th July, 1818.

[1] The Prince died in 1859. His son Ernest, Prince Leiningen, is in the British Navy, and commands the Royal yacht. The Princess Hohenlohe died on the 23rd of September, 1872.

Two daughters, both of whom died in infancy, were born to the Duke of Clarence, and it was therefore for many years uncertain whether he might not have issue to succeed him. Under these circumstances, it was wisely resolved to bring up the Princess Victoria in ignorance of the brilliant, though anxious, future which in all probability awaited her, and not until she was twelve years old was she permitted to know, that no one stood between herself and the succession to the throne.[2]

[2] In Lockhart's *Life of Scott* (vol. ix. p 242) the following entry from Scott's 'Diary' is given.—'May 19, 1828. Dined with the Duchess of Kent. I was very kindly received by Prince Leopold, and presented to the little Princess Victoria—the heir-apparent to the Crown, as things now stand. . . . This little lady is educating with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, "You are heir of England." I suspect if we could dissect the little heart, we should find some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter' The suspicion was natural, but wrong. This is conclusively shown in the following passage in a letter from the Baroness Lehzen (the Princess's governess) to Her Majesty (2nd December, 1867):—

'I ask your Majesty's leave to cite some remarkable words of your Majesty's when only twelve years old, while the Regency Bill was in progress. I then said to the Duchess of Kent, that now, for the first time, your Majesty ought to know your place in the succession. Her Royal Highness agreed with me, and I put the genealogical table into the historical book When Mr. Davys (the Queen's instructor, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough) was gone, the Princess Victoria opened as usual the book again, and seeing the additional paper said, "I never saw that before." "It was not thought necessary you should, Princess," I answered. "I see, I am nearer the throne than I thought." "So it is, Madam," I said. After some moments the Princess resumed, "Now, many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is more responsibility." The Princess having lifted up the forefinger of her right hand while she spoke, gave me that little hand, saying, "I will be good. I understand now, why you urged me so much to learn, even Latin. My aunts Augusta and Mary never did; but you told me Latin is the foundation of English grammar, and of all the elegant expressions, and I learned it as you wished it, but I understand all better now," and the Princess gave me her hand, repeating "I will be good!" I then said, "But your aunt Adelaide is still young and may have children, and of course they would ascend the throne after their father William IV., and not you, Princess." The Princess answered, "And if it was so, I should never feel disappointed, for I know by the love aunt Adelaide bears me, how fond she is of children." When Queen Adelaide lost her second princess, she wrote to the Duchess of Kent, "My children are dead, but yours lives, and she is mine, too!"'

'I cried much on learning it, and ever deplored this contingency.' —NOTE BY THE QUEEN.

The untimely death of the Duke of Kent (23rd January, 1820) within eight months after the birth of the Princess Victoria, naturally threw upon his brother-in-law, Prince Leopold, the care of his widow and child. The Prince, who was then in Scotland, hurried back to Sidmouth, where the Duke had died. Tortured by the associations connected with his own still recent affliction, he had never before had the courage to look upon the blooming face of his infant niece, but from this moment he assumed her father's place, and discharged its duties with conscientious devotion. The little 'May-Flower' was therefore an object of the deepest interest to her relatives in Coburg; and long before she could have been regarded as the future Queen, the idea of her marriage with one of her Coburg cousins had obviously taken such root in the family, that Prince Albert's nurse was in the habit of prattling to her charge, when he was only three years old, of his destined bride in England (*Early Years*, p. 213). As the years advanced, and it became more probable that what the Dowager Duchess of Coburg had truly called 'the dangerous grandeur of Royalty' might devolve upon the young head which was so dear to her, this idea grew into an abiding wish, strengthened by what she saw of the qualities mental and moral of the youngest of the Coburg Princes. The Duchess died in November 1831, but her views appear to have had the full concurrence of her son, now King Leopold, who had had repeated opportunities of forming an estimate from personal observation of the character of his nephew.

Letter of Baroness Lehzen to the Queen, 6th September, 1867.

In 1836 there was no longer any doubt as to the succession of the Princess Victoria to the throne, and in all probability at no very distant date. Already several aspirants for her hand were in the field. The time had therefore arrived for making some progress towards the fulfilment of what could not have been otherwise than an object of the greatest natural

anxiety to King Leopold. His own opinion was that no other Prince was so qualified to make his niece happy, or to fulfil worthily the difficult duties of the Consort of an English Queen. But he loved the Princess too well, and was too deeply conscious of the immense responsibility of such a choice, to act with precipitation, or upon his own judgment merely, which the bias of natural affection, no less than of family feeling, might insensibly have warped. He therefore took counsel with one who was not liable to be misled from any such cause, and on whose penetrating judgment of men and things, no less than his fearless independence, the King had learned by long experience to place implicit reliance. This was his friend and private adviser, Baron Christian Friedrich von Stockmar; and as this remarkable man was destined to play no unimportant part in the subsequent story of the Prince, it may not be out of place here to give some particulars of his past career.

He was a native of Coburg, born in 1787, and had entered the service of Prince Leopold, as private physician, in 1816, at the time of the Prince's marriage with the Princess Charlotte. She had died with her hand clasped in his, and it was he who had to announce to the Prince the blow which struck him to the heart, both in his affections and his ambition. By his sympathy and skilful treatment the Prince had been enabled to sustain a shock under which he might otherwise have sunk. From this time down to 1831 Stockmar acted as the Prince's private secretary and the controller of his household, residing almost exclusively in England, where he acquired a thorough knowledge of the country, its people, and Constitution, and bringing to the study of these the sympathy of strong liberal opinions, together with powers of observation, and philosophical deduction of a very high order. He took part, as the private adviser and representative of King Leopold, in the protracted and complex diplomatic negotia-

tions with the plenipotentiaries of the great European Powers, which took place in London after the King's acceptance of the Belgian Crown, and which resulted in the Treaty of 1831, for securing the independence and security of the new kingdom. The arrangement as to the English allowance settled upon Prince Leopold on his marriage with the Princess Charlotte, which became necessary on his ascending the Belgian throne, was also carried through by him, under circumstances of no slight difficulty, with signal tact and success. These transactions had brought him into intimate contact with the leading diplomatists of Europe, as well as with the chiefs of the two great political parties in England, and by these his unusual abilities, and his great single-mindedness, and sturdy integrity were held in high estimation. 'C'est un original,' said Count Félix de Merode of him; 'mais quel honnête homme!' And Lord Palmerston, no friendly critic, paid him this remarkable testimony, 'I have come in my life across only one absolutely disinterested man—Stockmar.'

He would accept no official appointment in Belgium, and in 1834 retired to Coburg, where his wife and family resided. Here he continued in active confidential correspondence with his former master, and had opportunities of seeing the young Princes, but only in the most casual way, from time to time. He had no relations with the Ducal House; and, indeed, there is reason to believe he was no favourite there. Weak in health, and void of personal ambition, the quiet studies of his tranquil life in Coburg, and the care of his own family, would have sufficed for his happiness. But an appeal from his old master for counsel or assistance at all times overcame every other consideration. A great issue, moreover, was now at stake. No one knew better than Stockmar how much must depend upon the Prince, who should be chosen to occupy the post nearest to

the throne of England; and his attachment to the young Princess, no less than his genuine love for the country over which she was destined to reign, were of themselves enough to make him forego his private inclinations, if by so doing he could advance the object which King Leopold had so deeply at heart.

That the King should place the greatest reliance on his judgment was most natural. Stockmar had been his chosen friend when he had himself looked forward to occupying the position and fulfilling the duties, to which, as husband of the future Queen of England, he had for a time cherished the proud hope of being called. He had in times of trial found in him a counsellor at once far-sighted and fearless, looking only to what was best, and, rarest virtue of all, unwarped by any bias of selfish personal considerations. Moreover, his position in Prince Leopold's English household had brought the Princess Victoria much under his observation. He was thus peculiarly qualified both by what he knew of her character, and by deep personal interest in her welfare, no less than by his knowledge of what would be looked for from her husband by the English nation, to give the best advice on the difficult problem submitted to his judgment. The short-lived union of his former master with the Princess Charlotte had, to use his own words in 1817, presented 'a rare picture of love and fidelity.' Her husband, in heart and head, in accomplishment and in will, had been a model Prince; and Stockmar was not a man to rest contented with less than the hope of seeing this state of things reproduced under still happier auspices. This at least is certain, that the austere sincerity with which he answered to the appeal for his advice was the happiest omen for the welfare of the objects of his solicitude, and especially for the future relations between the Prince and himself.

His opinion of the Prince, as he knew him in 1836, is

expressed in the following letter, in the beginning of that year, to the King of the Belgians:—

'Albert,' he writes, 'is a fine young fellow, well grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities; and who, if things go well, may in a few years turn out a strong, handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified demeanour. Externally, therefore, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times and in all countries must please. It may prove, too, a lucky circumstance, that even now he has something of an English look.

'But now the question is, How as to his mind? On this point, too, one hears much to his credit. But these judgments are all more or less partial; and until I have observed him longer, I can form no judgment as to his capacity and the probable development of his character. He is said to be circumspect, discreet, and even now cautious. But all this is not enough. He ought to have not merely great ability, but a *right* ambition, and great force of will as well. To pursue for a lifetime a political career so arduous demands more than energy and inclination—it demands also that earnest frame of mind which is ready of its own accord to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent what he has undertaken? If he does not from the very outset accept it as a vocation of grave responsibility, on the efficient fulfilment of which his honour and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding.'[3]

[3] This letter is extracted from a valuable volume of Memorabilia from Baron Stockmar's Papers, to which we shall have frequent occasion to refer, published by Baron Stockmar's son, the Baron Ernst von Stockmar, entitled *Denkwürdigkeiten aus den Papieren des Freiherrn Christian Friedrich v. Stockmar. Braunschweig*, 1872. Our references are to the original volume, and not to the English translation published under the editorship of Max Müller (2 vols. Longmans & Co., 1872).

These words have peculiar significance, as indicating the principle which regulated the formation of the Prince's character and the practice of his life.

Stockmar declined to commit himself to an opinion until he had seen more of the Prince. He had frequent opportunities of doing so within the next few months, and closer observation satisfied him the mind and character of the Prince were such, that by time and training he might be expected to qualify himself for the high vocation for which he was designed. But one thing above all he urged as indispensable, that no claim on the Prince's behalf for the hand of his cousin should be preferred, unless an impression in his favour from personal acquaintance should first have been produced (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 311). An invitation from the Duchess of Kent to the Duke of Coburg and his sons to visit her at Kensington Palace presented a favourable opportunity for an introduction. 'But,' Stockmar wrote, 'it must be made a *sine quâ non*, that the object of the visit be kept strictly secret from the Princess as well as from the Prince, so as to leave them completely at their ease.'

Accordingly the Duke came to England with his sons in May 1836, and remained there for about four weeks. The secret was kept. It could, in a sense, have scarcely been a secret to the Prince, as the Dowager Duchess of Gotha had often spoken to him years before of her earnest wishes on the subject. But he had no reason to think this was more than a family wish; and the Princess at least was left freely to the impulse of her own inclination. That this was favourable and let itself be unconsciously seen in her letters to her uncle is most probable. At all events, almost simultaneously with the Prince's leaving England, King Leopold made her aware of his wishes on the subject. The answer made it impossible to doubt how entirely those of the Princess were in accordance

with his own. 'I have only now to beg you, my dearest uncle,' it concludes, 'to take care of the health of one now so dear to me, and to take him under your special protection. I hope and trust that all will go on prosperously and well on this subject now of so much importance to me' (*Letter of Princess Victoria to King Leopold*, 7th June, 1836).

The Prince, however, was still kept in the dark; but the plan for his education, with a view to the possibility of his being called to fulfil the duties of Prince Consort, was carried into effect. Baron Stockmar had previously disposed of this question with his accustomed foresight and strong practical sense, in a letter to King Leopold. Coburg, he urged (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 311), was no place for the studies now required. Able tutors might no doubt be found there; but frank intercourse with other men was essential to teach the Prince what men are and how to cope with them: and how was this possible at a small Court, with all its exclusiveness and conventional restrictions? Berlin, again, was most undesirable. The thing of primary importance, a just view of the present state of Europe, could scarcely be acquired there. The politics of Prussia, which at that time owed its position among the European Powers more to the favour of circumstances than to its internal strength, were too much those of a parvenu, who is constantly either over or under-rating himself and others. The attitude which it had taken up towards Germany was neither politic nor honourable. It could not therefore form a good political school, and the Prince would hear there everything about politics, except the truth. Socially, too, Berlin was, in Stockmar's opinion, a bad school for Princes, the tone of that capital being formal and priggish. All that could be learned there would be the arts of administration and of war, but whatever was essential of these might be equally well learned elsewhere along with other things of no less

moment. In Berlin, moreover, profligacy was epidemic, and nowhere would it be so difficult to keep young men free from the prevailing taint. Vienna, again, in the peculiar relations which it occupied towards Germany, was in Stockmar's opinion no school for a German Prince. The Universities? Their training was too one-sided and theoretical for one whose vocation would be to deal practically with men and things on a great scale. Brussels, on the other hand, seemed to combine the most favourable conditions. There the Prince would be under the eye and influence of his uncle, who was living in the full stream of European politics, and was working out the problem of Constitutional Government, where it had been hitherto unknown; and, whether the English marriage was brought to bear or not, the Prince would be far more likely to profit by the study of politics in the free and stirring arena of a Constitutional Kingdom, than in one where the whole machinery of Government was propelled from a monarchical centre.

Following this advice, the Prince and his brother went to Brussels on leaving England, taking Paris on their way, where they made the acquaintance of the Orleans family. They were placed under the care of Baron Wiechmann, a retired officer of the English German Legion, and remained for a period of ten months closely occupied with the study of history and modern languages. Under the guidance of M. Quetelet, the eminent statist and mathematician, the Prince also devoted himself to the study of the higher mathematics, and the application of the law of probabilities to social and natural phenomena. The line of inquiry and of thought thus opened was ever afterwards a favourite one with the Prince, who from time to time, in the correspondence which he continued until the last year of his life to keep up with M. Quetelet, regrets that he is prevented from prosecu-

ting it as he could have wished by the multiplicity of the claims made upon his time by art, science, and invention, and which continued to grow in almost overwhelming number as the years advanced. In this correspondence he frequently recurs with evident pleasure to the time spent in Brussels; and he took an opportunity in his Address at the Opening of the International Statistical Congress (16th July, 1860) publicly to express his acknowledgments to M. Quetelet, and to pay a warm tribute to the merits of that very distinguished man. It was characteristic of the Prince's candour that he should have done so. The influence of M. Quetelet in the formation of his conclusions upon many important subjects had unquestionably been considerable. Of none of M. Quetelet's works, perhaps, was this more true than of his original and most suggestive volume, *Du Système social, et des Lois qui le regissent, Paris*, 1848. This work was dedicated to the Prince, and its influence is apparent in many of the views which were subsequently developed in his Speeches and Addresses.

From Brussels the young Princes went, in April 1837, to Bonn; where they remained, with the exception of the usual vacations, for the next eighteen months. Under the eminent men who then maintained the reputation of that University, Bethman Hollweg, A. W. v. Schlegel, the younger Fichte, Lobell, Kaufmann, Perthès, d'Alten and others, Prince Albert pursued his studies with the same eagerness by which his earlier years had been marked, and distinguished himself by the rapid progress which he made, especially in the natural sciences, in political economy, and in philosophy. 'Amongst all the young men at the University,' writes Prince William of Lowenstein, with whom he there formed a close and intimate friendship, 'he was distinguished by his knowledge, his diligence, and his amiable bearing in society. He liked above all things to discuss questions of public law and meta-

physics, and constantly, during our many walks, juridical principles or philosophical doctrines were thoroughly discussed.' Amid all his absorption in those severer studies, to which the prospects of a great possible future with its responsibilities can scarcely have failed to give concentration and purpose, the Prince was careful to keep up his training in the manly exercises appropriate to his youth. For his excellence in these generally, and, like the young Laertes, 'for his rapier most especial,' he was no less distinguished, and in a fencing match carried off the prize from about thirty competitors. Nor was music forgotten, of which the Prince was always passionately fond, and in which he had already shown considerable gifts as a composer. Among his companions, says Prince von Löwenstein, he was looked upon as a master of the art. In short, he adds, 'the Prince entered with the greatest eagerness into every study in which he engaged, whether belonging to science or art. He spared no exertion either of mind or body; on the contrary, he rather sought difficulties in order to overcome them. The result was such an harmonious development of his powers and faculties as is very seldom arrived at.'

The Prince's talent for mimicry and the grotesque was often exercised for the amusement of his companions. A University, especially a German University, with the oddly accentuated ways of its professors, can never fail to supply abundant materials for this kind of gift, and as the Prince's excellent memory, and mastery of the various subjects dealt with, enabled him either to reproduce whole passages from their lectures, or to improvise excellent imitations of them, his skill was sure never to be in want either of a theme or of a sympathetic audience. His powers in this direction, which appear to have been very freely exercised at the University, were never lost; neither were the keen perception of the ludicrous, and the genial play of humour deadened, out of

which they sprang. Happily for a man of earnest habits of mind, these qualities survive sorrows, disappointments, suffering in all its forms, and often help to make things endurable, under which mind and body would otherwise succumb.

Soon after the Prince had settled in Bonn, the death of William IV. (20th June, 1837) devolved somewhat unexpectedly upon the Princess Victoria, then only eighteen, the grave responsibilities of Queen of England. These were made more serious by the state of parties at the time, each arrayed in envenomed hostility against the other, and maintaining the struggle for power with a zeal, which the accession of a young and popular Sovereign to the throne could scarcely fail to quicken into warmer life. Against the dangers of her difficult position the young Queen had been secured, so far as this could be done, by careful training in sound constitutional principles, and by the paternal counsels of King Leopold, whose great knowledge and experience were constantly at her service. In anticipation of the Princess's legal majority, on the previous 24th of May, he had arranged for the presence of Baron Stockmar in England to aid her by his counsel and assistance; and the arrival of the Baron, about a month before the King's death, happened most opportunely, when the immediate prospect of the Accession had brought closely home to the Princess the magnitude and delicacy of the duties she was likely so soon to be called upon to perform. He was a man on whose judgment, forethought, and purity of motive, no less than on his thorough knowledge of the English Constitution and of the English people, entire reliance might be placed; and possessing as he did the complete confidence of the Princess, his advice at such a crisis could not fail to be of the highest value. As such it was viewed by her, and it strengthened her steps amid the mazes of the numerous perplexities which surrounded her new position.

The Prince was not likely to be an indifferent observer of what was taking place in England. He lost no time in congratulating his 'dearest cousin' on the great change which had taken place in her life. 'Now,' he adds, writing on the 26th of June (*Early Years*, p. 147), 'you are Queen of the mightiest land of Europe, in your hand lies the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist you and strengthen you with its strength in that high but difficult task! I hope that your reign may be long, happy, and glorious, and that your efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of your subjects.' His correspondence also records the satisfaction with which he hears of the 'astonishing self-possession' of the young Queen, and of the high praise from all parties, which seemed to promise so auspiciously for her reign.

The accession of the Queen revived the rumours, which had been for some time current, of a contemplated marriage with her cousin; and it was thought expedient by their uncle, with the view of withdrawing public attention for the time from the young Princes, that they should spend the autumn vacation of 1837 in making a tour through Switzerland and the north of Italy. September and October were accordingly spent in a thorough exploration of Switzerland and the Italian lakes on foot. This mode of travelling, rigidly adhered to by the Prince under every difficulty, enabled him to enjoy the beauties of the country to the fullest degree. Milan and Venice, with their treasures of art, completed the delights of his tour. Nor was the young Queen absent from his thoughts, for wherever he went he collected views and other memorials—such as a 'Rose des Alpes' from the Righi, an autograph of Voltaire's procured at Ferney—which he forwarded to her in a small volume upon his return. The pleasures of this tour were somewhat overshadowed for the Princes by the thought that their lives, which had hitherto

run on in a mingled current, were soon to be divided, and that next year each must start upon a separate course in the fulfilment of their respective careers. 'That moment,' the Prince writes to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha (19th November, 1837), 'is, in its saddest form, ever before me.'

On his return to Bonn, invigorated by his holiday, the Prince plunged with increased energy into the studies appropriate to his future position: Roman law, political economy, history, anthropology, and philosophy, with the modern languages. At these, especially the first, he worked with the closest application to the end of the year, when he sought some relaxation in those long pedestrian rambles for which the Rhine country near Bonn presents so many opportunities.

But the time had now arrived when the project of the English marriage had to be brought explicitly before him. The Queen had been consulted by her uncle, who considered it expedient that some 'decisive arrangement' should be made for the year 1839. To this Her Majesty demurred, for reasons which her uncle considered conclusive, and which those who know the world best will agree were dictated by sound practical sense. She was herself, she urged, too young. So also was the Prince; and, being still under age, a marriage with him would be regarded by her subjects as premature. Moreover, his mastery of the English language was still very imperfect, and, if he was to take up a proper position in England, it was important that this defect should be remedied; and that he should also have a wider experience, more practised habits of observation, and more self-reliance, than it was possible he could up to that time have acquired.

Letter of the Queen to King Leopold, 4th January, 1838.

During a visit which he made to Brussels with his brother, in the beginning of 1838, the Prince was made aware of what was proposed, and of these necessary conditions.

'I have had a long conversation with Albert,' King Leopold writes to Baron Stockmar, who was then in England,

in the March of that year, 'and have put the whole case honestly and kindly before him. He looks at the question from its most elevated and honourable point of view. He considers that troubles are inseparable from all human positions, and that, therefore, if one must be subject to plagues and annoyances, it is better to be so for some great and worthy object than for trivial and paltry ends. I told him it would be necessary to postpone the marriage for a few years. . . . I find him very sensible on all these points. *But he made one just remark.* "*I am ready,*" *he said,* "*to* submit to this delay, if I have only some certain assurance to go upon. But if, after waiting, perhaps, for three years, I should find that the Queen no longer desired the marriage, it would place me in a ridiculous position, and would, to a certain extent, ruin all my prospects for the future."' In the same letter the King remarks of the Prince: 'If I am not very much mistaken, he possesses all the qualities required to fit him for the position which he will occupy in England. His understanding is sound, his apprehension clear and rapid, and his heart in the right place. He has great powers of observation, and possesses singular prudence, without anything about him that can be called cold or morose' (*Early Years*, p. 217). Already the Prince was remarkable for a power of self-control unusual in so young a man. The King's attention, he mentions, had been called to this by the Prince's governor, Colonel Wiechmann, with the remark that 'he will find this quality most useful to him in after life.' It was certainly often and severely tested.

In the course of this visit it was arranged that, after leaving the University, the Prince should make a tour in Italy to complete his education. The Queen had made Baron Stockmar, who was in constant personal communication with her at this time, fully aware of her feelings and wishes upon this subject, and requested him to accompany

the Prince upon his tour. What had passed between them was well known to King Leopold. Neither he nor Baron Stockmar was therefore likely to entertain misgivings with respect to Her Majesty's ultimate intentions, although these appear to have been, perhaps not unnaturally, present to the mind of the Prince's father (*Early Years*, p. 331). In April the young Prince again visited King Leopold at Brussels, and the King was able to report to Baron Stockmar on the 12th of that month, that the objection to the Prince Albert's too youthful appearance was rapidly disappearing. 'Albert,' he writes, 'is much improved. He looks so much more manly, and from his "tournure" one might easily take him to be twenty-one or twenty-two.'

With the Italian journey was to come the dreaded separation of the brothers. Prince Ernest was to go to Dresden, and there enter upon active military life, starting first, so as not to be left at home alone. 'The separation,' writes Prince Albert to Prince von Lowenstein, 26th October, 1838, 'will be frightfully painful to us. Until now we have never, as long as we can recollect, been a single day away from each other. I cannot bear to think of that moment.' So completely, 'with two seeming bodies but one heart,' had the brothers up to this moment shared all their sports, their studies, their joys and troubles, the life of each had been so merged in that of the other, that it is with an obvious shock and sense of strangeness the Prince finds himself, in announcing his brother's departure to their grandmother at Gotha, forced 'to give up the custom of saying *we*, and to use the *I*, which sounds so cold and egotistical' (*Early Years*, p. 184).[4]

The wrench was severe to both. But the younger Prince

[4] The old feeling comes out charmingly in a letter by the Prince to M. Quetelet, of 12th August, 1857:—'De me trouver avec mon frère à Bruxelles, et de vous revoir à l'Observatoire, cela a bien renouvelé les souvenirs d'un temps très-heureux pour nous.'

was not permitted to brood over it in the solitude of home. A few days afterwards he set out for Italy, in fulfilment of a long-cherished desire, accompanied by Baron Stockmar. He knew the Baron only slightly, and indeed was rather at a loss to understand why he was sought out by one to whom he was almost a stranger. But the services of his uncle's friend were not to be slighted, especially as Baron Stockmar was already familiar with the ground from having visited it more than once, along with Prince Leopold. On the 24th of December, 1838, they reached Florence, where they remained in the Casa Cerini till the following March. To one who, like the Prince, loved and had studied both Nature and Art, Florence was, as might be expected, full of charm. 'I am often quite intoxicated with delight,' he writes to his old University friend, Prince von Lowenstein, 'when I come out of one of the galleries. The country round Florence, too, possesses extraordinary attractions.' And Sir Francis Seymour, then a Lieutenant in the 19th Regiment, who had, at the request of King Leopold, joined the Prince at Florence in February, and remained with him for the remainder of his tour, mentions that his great delight 'was to take long walks in the beautiful country round Florence. This he appeared heartily to enjoy. He became at once gay and animated. "Now I can breathe! Now I am happy!" Such were his constant exclamations.'

In Florence the Prince continued his active and studious habits, rising at six and working till noon, dining simply at two o'clock, when his drink was water, and going to bed as a rule at nine. Music occupied much of his attention. He played well on both the piano and the organ, and he would often resort to the Church of the Badia, when it was closed to the public, to play on its fine organ. As the music penetrated the solemn stillness of the church and cloisters (Sir Francis Seymour writes), the monks on their way to

the Refectory would stop and listen, whispering to each other, 'Quel Principe forestiere suona bene quasi quanto il nostro Papi'—Papi being the organist of the Badia, and also the Prince's instructor.

Little as the Prince was disposed for such things, the amusements of society necessarily claimed many of his evenings. 'I have thrown myself,' he says, in his letter already quoted, 'into the vortex of society. I have danced, dined, supped, paid compliments, been introduced to people and had people introduced to me, chattered French and English, exhausted every conceivable phrase about the weather, played the amiable—in short, have made "bonne mine à mauvais jeu." You know my passion for this sort of thing, and must therefore admire my strength of character, in that I have never excused myself, never returned home till 5 in the morning, in a word, that I have fairly drained the Carnival cup to the dregs.' This playful exaggeration of his sacrifices to the claims of fashionable life is well balanced by the ball-room incident recorded by Sir Francis Seymour (*Early Years*, p. 196). Seeing the Prince engaged in a warm discussion with the blind Marquis di Capponi, a man of distinguished attainments, the Grand Duke Leopold remarked to Lady Augusta Fox, 'Here is a Prince of whom we may be proud. Lovely partners wait for him, while he is occupied with the learned.'

Even his elderly and sage friend Stockmar rallied him on his disinclination to general society and backwardness in paying attention to the ladies; ascribing these peculiarities to the circumstance, that the Prince had unfortunately too little of the society and tending of a mother or other cultivated woman during his early years. They were probably quite as much the result of temperament. In these matters, at any rate, it is idle to fight against nature or confirmed habit. The Prince was too sincere to affect an

interest or admiration which he did not feel, and was at no pains at any time of his life to dispense the small current coin of compliment or pleasantry, the ring of which, if agreeable, is too frequently false.

From Florence the Prince went in March to Rome, where he spent three weeks, working hard from daybreak to sunset in seeing all that it offered of interest in Art ancient and modern, and in antiquities. He did not spare himself the tourist's accustomed penance of an interview with the Pope (Gregory XVI.). 'We conversed,' he writes, 'in Italian on the influence the Egyptians had had on Greek Art, and that again on Roman Art. The Pope asserted that the Greeks had taken their models from the Etruscans. In spite of his infallibility, I ventured to assert that they had derived their lessons in art from the Egyptians' (*Early Years*, p. 200). Naples was next visited, with all the surrounding places of interest; of which none struck him so much as Pompeii, the place which above all others stirs the imagination of the student of ancient life and manners.

From this point the Prince turned back to Milan, taking Rome, Tivoli, Viterbo, Sienna, Leghorn, Lucca and Genoa on the way. At Milan, where the Prince was met by his father, Baron Stockmar left him, and the Prince returned to Coburg, by way of Geneva. Here Sir Francis Seymour, with whom the Prince had become very intimate, took his leave, the last of the pleasant group, whose complete harmony had made their short sojourn together most agreeable.

The Italian tour was acknowledged by the Prince to have been of great advantage to him, and 'the society of a man so highly distinguished as Baron Stockmar to have been most precious and valuable.' 'My range of observation has been doubled, and my power of forming a right judgment will be much increased by having seen for myself.' That he had already learned not only to think for himself, but to speak

his thoughts, throwing off the cant of universal admiration which infects most young travellers, is very apparent from what follows. 'Italy is truly a most interesting country, and an inexhaustible source of knowledge. One contrives, however, to taste extraordinarily little of the enjoyment one promises oneself there. In many, many respects the country is far behind what one had expected. Climate, scenery, artistic feeling and skill, in all these one feels most disagreeably disappointed.'

Soon after the Prince's return to Coburg, his brother's coming of age was celebrated (21st June, 1839) with the usual festivities; and by a special act of the legislature Prince Albert was at the same time declared to be of age. It was a source of deep gratification to him, that in this important step of their lives his brother and himself had still been allowed to go hand in hand. 'Now,' he writes, 'I am my own master, as I hope always to be, and under all circumstances.'

The return home had been looked forward to eagerly by the Prince, as enabling him to resume the studies interrupted by his Italian tour. Much to his chagrin, he had to accompany his father to Carlsbad—'a place that I hate mortally,'—at the very time, as he remarks in a letter to Baron Stockmar (28th May, 1839), when he had 'formed the finest plans for the study of English language and history, for which the quiet of the Rosenau would have been particularly well suited.' These regrets were intensified, when a few months afterwards he found himself suddenly called to a position, in which it was of the highest moment to him that he should be thoroughly master of both. All he was able to secure was a short interval 'of quiet and regular occupation' at the Rosenau in September,—soon, however, to be interrupted by the visit to England, which decided the future course of his life.

CHAPTER III.

The impressions of the Prince's character produced upon Baron Stockmar during the Italian tour have been preserved in a memorandum by the Baron, of which some portions are quoted in his *Memoirs*.

'The Prince,' he says (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 331), 'bears a striking resemblance to his mother, and at the same time, though differing in much, takes after her in many respects, both physical and mental. He has the same mobility and readiness of mind, the same intelligence, the same overruling desire and talent for appearing kind and amiable to others, the same tendency to *espièglerie*, and to the treatment of men and things in a droll and consequently often pleasant fashion, the same habit of not dwelling long upon a subject.

'His constitution cannot be called strong; still I incline to think, that with proper dietetic management of himself, it may easily gain strength and stability. After any exertion he is apt to look pale and exhausted. Great exertion is repugnant to him, and his tendency is to spare himself both morally and physically.

'Full of the best intentions and the noblest resolutions, he often falls short in giving them effect. His judgment is in many things beyond his years; but hitherto at least he shows not the slightest interest in politics. Even while the most important occurrences are in progress, and their issues undecided, he does not care to look into a newspaper. He

holds, moreover, all foreign journals in abhorrence; and while declaring that the Augsburg *Allgemeine Zeitung* is the only paper one wants, or that is worth reading, he does not even read that.

'As respects *les belles manières*, there is still room for improvement. This defect must be in a great measure ascribed to the fact, that his earliest years were passed without the advantage of the society or care of a mother or other cultivated woman.[1]

'On the whole, he will always have more success with men than with women, in whose society he shows too little *empressement*, and is too indifferent and retiring.'

Such was the searching accuracy of Stockmar's powers of observation, that it is impossible to doubt the general truth of this sketch. The eye of the old physician was not more quick to detect the latent constitutional weakness, which was afterwards fatally developed, than to see the disinclination to sustained effort, which was probably in a great measure, if not wholly, the result of that weakness. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the standard by which Stockmar judged the Prince was no ordinary one. How few young men, even among the greatly gifted, could have borne so well a scrutiny so relentlessly severe? Such it was, and could not fail to be, for no one could estimate more soundly how much would be required and expected of the future husband of the Queen of England. Without exceptional strength and elevation of character, exceptional clearness of aim and powers of work, disappointment could not fail to ensue. The Prince's indifference to politics, moreover,

[1] Stockmar was too subtle an observer not to have felt the truth of the opinion expressed by Goethe in the *Torquato Tasso*:

> Willst du genau erfahren was sich ziemt,
> So frage nur bei edeln Frauen an.
>
> Wouldst thou be eminent for courteous grace,
> Seek noble women out, and learn of th[em]

must have been a source of the greatest anxiety to Stockmar, knowing, as he did, how soon and how urgently the Prince might be called upon to deal with the most intricate problems, both political and social, which were then springing up on all sides. With such a prospect in view, the highest general accomplishments were not likely to satisfy this stern yet kindly critic.

It has been already shown, however, that even in the Prince's boyhood and early youth the earnest tone of his mind, and the firmness and energy of his character, had impressed his brother and fellow-students with a sense of superiority to which they felt themselves compelled to bow. Whatever, therefore, Stockmar may have seen in him of a tendency 'to spare himself morally and physically' must have been due to temporary causes, and foreign to his inner nature. The latent energy of will, combined with the high moral sense, which enabled the Prince, the moment the call of duty came, to overcome the natural tendencies which might otherwise have been so injurious to his career, had either been under-estimated by Stockmar, or had escaped his notice. Neither is this to be wondered at, for nothing had occurred, or was likely to occur, during the tour in Italy, to bring this aspect of his character into relief. Stockmar's apprehension manifestly was, that, apart from his distaste for politics, there was a want of thoroughness and of practical aim in the Prince's character which, in a man so fond of art, and of such varied accomplishments, might very readily degenerate into dilettantism. The result proved that he was mistaken; but, such being his fear, it was natural that he should press upon the Prince, as he did, both then and subsequently, the necessity for such a discipline of his tastes and habits as might have the effect of overcoming every defect of natural inclination. To his suggestions on this point the Prince listened with his usual candour; and their effect is

visible in the disappointment which we have seen that he felt at being prevented from devoting the months after his return from Italy to unbroken study of those branches of knowledge, in which it was essential for his future career that he should be thoroughly grounded.

Meanwhile the current of events in England made it desirable that the question of the marriage of the Queen should be again pressed. So long as Her Majesty's choice was not avowedly fixed, the disposal of her hand could not fail to be an object of family or dynastic ambition, and of diplomatic intrigue. Nor were busy schemers wanting, whose views as to the fitting husband for the Queen were influenced by considerations very different from those which, as we have seen, governed King Leopold in his selection of Prince Albert. Their intrigues, intrigues from within as well as from without, were not unobserved; and although, from their very nature, such projects could not be otherwise than futile, still their mere existence was a cause of annoyance, and they might, if persevered in, have become a source of serious disquietude. To put an end to them at once and for ever was, therefore, an object of importance.

Moreover, many difficult public questions were being agitated, and others were looming in the distance. The strife of parties, already sufficiently fierce, had recently been embittered by the circumstances attending the attempt of Sir Robert Peel to form an administration in May 1839, which had broken down on a question as to the retirement of the Ladies of the Queen's Bedchamber. It is well understood now, that there was misunderstanding at the time on both sides; but the immediate effect was to exasperate the Tory party by the feeling that a tottering Ministry owed its continuance in office to the personal predilections of the Sovereign. This was not so; but at the same time it cannot be denied that the young Queen's warm personal

regard for Lord Melbourne, and for the adherents of his administration who had surrounded Her Majesty since her Accession, had not unnaturally caused her to drift insensibly into political partisanship, and to forget for a time the obvious, but up to that time much neglected, doctrine, inculcated upon her by her uncle, and practised by himself in Belgium with marked success, that it is the paramount duty of a constitutional Monarch to maintain a position of neutrality towards the leaders of party on both sides. The continuance of the state of things to which this led must have been productive of consequences the most mischievous; and to avert such a result, as well probably as to close the life of dazzling and continuous excitement, which the Queen has herself pronounced to be 'detrimental to all natural feelings and affections' (*Early Years*, p. 200), those who had her welfare most at heart were anxious to secure for her without longer delay a husband's guidance and support.

To effect this, however, was no simple matter. All that the Queen had heard of the Prince was most favourable. Her inclination also towards him remained unchanged; and, to use her own words, 'she never had an idea, if she married at all, of any one else.' Still Her Majesty desired delay, and she had expressed this wish so strongly in writing to King Leopold (15th July, 1839), that he apparently deemed it prudent to place the prospects of a union before the Prince under a more unpromising aspect than was altogether justified by Her Majesty's language. The Prince could not otherwise have come to England, as he did, under the mistaken impression that the Queen 'wished the affair to be considered as broken off, and that for four years she could think of no marriage.'[2]

Her Majesty's reasons for desiring delay need not be

[2] See his letter to Prince von Löwenstein, *Early Years*, p. 246.

dwelt upon, as they were destined very soon to give way before the irresistible feeling inspired by the Prince, when they again met. On the 10th of October, 1839, he arrived with his brother at Windsor Castle. 'The three years,' says General Grey (*Early Years*, p. 223), 'which had passed since the Princes were last in England had greatly improved their personal appearance. Tall and manly as they both were, Prince Albert was eminently handsome. But there was also in his countenance a gentleness of expression, and peculiar sweetness in his smile, with a look of deep thought and high intelligence in his clear blue eye and expansive forehead, that added a charm to the impression he produced in those who saw him, far beyond that derived from mere beauty or regularity of features.' On the second day after their arrival, 'the most friendly demonstrations,' as the Prince informs his friend Prince von Löwenstein (*Early Years*, p. 246), 'were directed towards him,' and on the same day the impression produced on the Queen is thus conveyed by Her Majesty in a letter to her uncle: 'Albert's beauty is most striking, and he is most amiable and unaffected—in short, very *fascinating*.' 'The young men are very amiable delightful companions, and I am very happy to have them here.'

These words of the young Princess recall, as we read them, by their artless frankness, Miranda's burst of admiration, when she sees Ferdinand for the first time,

> I might call him
> A thing divine, for nothing natural
> I ever saw so noble.—*Tempest*, act i. sc. 2.

Like Prospero, too, the King, well able to appreciate their full significance, must have felt disposed to exclaim,

> It goes on, I see,
> As my soul prompts it.

And indeed it is obvious that this feeling was present to

his mind in acknowledging the Queen's letter (15th October, 1839). 'I am sure,' he says, 'you will like the cousins the more, the longer you see them. They are young men of merit, and without that puppylike affectation, which is so often found with young gentlemen of rank; and, though remarkably well informed, they are very free from pedantry.

'Albert is a very agreeable companion. His manners are so gentle and harmonious, that one likes to have him near oneself. I always found him so when I had him with me, and I think his travels have still further improved him. He is full of talent and fun, and draws cleverly. I am glad to hear that they please the people who see them. They deserve it, and were rather nervous about it. I trust they will enliven your sojourn in the old castle, and may Albert be able to strew roses without thorns on the pathway of life of our good Victoria! He is well qualified to do so' (*Early Years*, p. 229).

While the King was writing thus from Brussels, all had been made clear between the parties themselves. The previous day (14th October), the Queen had informed Lord Melbourne of her intention. He showed the greatest satisfaction at the announcement, adding the expression of his conviction, that it would not only make the Queen's position more comfortable, but would be well received by the country, who were anxious for her marriage. The Queen lost no time in communicating to King Leopold what had passed between the Prince and herself. Great was his delight at the accomplishment of the cherished wish of years.

'I had,' he writes (24th October, 1839), 'when I learned your decision, almost the feeling of old Simeon: "Now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace." Your choice has been for these last years my conviction of what might and would be best for your happiness. . . . In your position, which may and will perhaps become in future even more

difficult in a political point of view, you could not exist without having a happy and agreeable "intérieur." And I am much deceived (which I think I am not), or you will find in Albert just the very qualities and disposition which are indispensable for your happiness, and which will suit your own character, temper, and mode of life.'

There was another, who was not forgotten by either the Queen or Prince in the first tumult of their happiness, for they knew well how he had set his heart upon the result, which had now so happily come about. This was Baron Stockmar. To him the Queen had so recently and so strongly expressed her resolution not to marry for some time, that she approached the subject with a naïve embarrassment, which must have touched the heart of this devoted friend.

'Windsor Castle, 15th October, 1839.

'I *do* feel so guilty, I know not how to begin my letter—but I think the news it will contain will be sufficient to ensure your forgiveness. Albert has completely won my heart, and all was settled between us this morning. . . . I feel certain he will make me very happy. I wish I could say I felt as certain of *my* making him happy, but I shall do my best. Uncle Leopold must tell you all about the details, which I have not time to do. . . . Albert is very much attached to you.'

The next day (16th October, 1839), Prince Albert writes to give Baron Stockmar what he knew would be 'the most welcome news possible.' 'Victoria,' he adds (*Early Years*, p. 226), 'is so good and kind to me, that I am often puzzled to believe that I should be the object of so much affection. I know the interest you take in my happiness, and therefore pour out my heart to you. . . . More or more seriously I cannot write; I am at this moment too much bewildered to do so

Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen,
Es schwelgt das Herz in Seligkeit.'[3]

Stockmar would not have been Stockmar, if, while offering to the Prince his hearty congratulations in return, he had not coupled them with earnest counsels as to the course which must be pursued in laying the foundation of his future happiness, and in fulfilling worthily the duties of his great position. One hope had been fulfilled; it had yet to be crowned by the fulfilment of the other—that the Prince should in every sense prove himself true to the high ideal Stockmar had designed for him. The Prince's reply was well calculated to assure him he would not be disappointed.

'Dear Baron Stockmar,—A thousand, thousand thanks for your dear, kind letter. I felt sure you would take much interest in an event of such moment to myself, and for which you have yourself paved the way.

'Your prophecy is fulfilled. The climax has come upon us by surprise, before we could have expected it; and I now doubly regret that the last summer, which I might have employed in many useful preparations, has been thrown away, in deference to the wishes of relations and the views of those who influenced the disposal of my life.

'I have laid to heart your friendly and kind-hearted counsels as to the true foundation on which my future happiness must rest, and they accord entirely with the principles which I had already thought out upon that subject for myself. An individuality, a character, which shall win the respect, the love, and the confidence of the Queen and of the nation, must be the keystone of my position. Such an individuality gives a guarantee for the disposition, which prompts the

[3] Heaven opens on the ravish'd eye,
The heart is all entranced in bliss.

These lines are from Schiller's *Song of the Bell*, always a favourite poem with the Prince

actions; and, where this exists, even should mistakes be committed, they are more likely to have allowance made for them, than are the best and grandest designs to secure support, where confidence in their author is wanting.

'If, therefore, I prove a "noble" Prince in the true sense of the word, as you call upon me to be, it will cost me less trouble to act wisely and prudently, and thence a richer harvest of blessings will follow on my acts.

'I will not let my courage fail. With firm resolution and true zeal on my part, I cannot fail to continue "noble, manly, and princely" in all things. In regulating my actions good advice is the one thing needful; and that you can give me better than any one, if you will only make up your mind to sacrifice your time to me, at least for the first year of my being here.

'I have still much to say to you, but must conclude, as the courier cannot wait longer. I hope, however, to discuss the subject more fully with you at Wiesbaden in person. Hoping I shall there find you well and hearty, I remain,

'Yours truly,

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor, 6th November, 1839.'

Neither the happiness of what Schiller has called *Die schöne Zeit der ersten Liebe*,[4] a happiness in the Prince's case made more intense by the singular purity and unselfishness of his nature, on which the devotion shown him seems to have come with a bewildering strangeness, nor the brilliancy of the position into which this love had raised him, blinded him for a moment to its sterner features. Indeed, for a

[4] Ach, dass sie ewig grünen bliebe
Die schöne Zeit der ersten Liebe!

Ah me! That Love's delicious time
Might keep the freshness of its prime!

nature such as his these must have possessed a positive charm, in the necessity which they imposed upon it of bracing itself to grapple with difficulties and to subdue opposition. *Treu und Fest, True and Firm*, was the motto of his House, and if the ways of life were to be all pleasantness and peace, the blazon would have been a continual rebuke to so chivalrous a spirit. 'With the exception of my relations to the Queen,' he writes to his step-mother (*Early Years*, p. 238), 'my future position will have its dark sides, and the sky will not always be blue and unclouded. But life has its thorns in every position, and the consciousness of having used one's powers and endeavours for an object so great as that of promoting the welfare of so many will surely be sufficient to support me.'

One immediate pang came with his triumph—the thought of bidding adieu to the dear Thuringian land, and to all who loved him there, and whom he loved so deeply. This troubled him in his brightest moments. 'Oh, the future!' he writes to the Duchess of Gotha, well knowing what an echo the words would awaken in her heart, 'does it not bring with it the moment when I shall have to take leave of my dear, dear home, and of you? I cannot think of this without being overcome by a feeling of profound melancholy.' He comforts the kind guardian of his youth, of whose life his formed no small part, by protesting that it will be easy for him—though he must even then have doubted his own words—'to make a run over occasionally' to see his kindred, and concludes by asking her blessing, with the assurance, 'It will be a talisman to me against all the storms the future may have in store for me.'

Leaving London on the 14th of November the Princes proceeded by way of Bonn to Wiesbaden, where they found the King of the Belgians, who had summoned Baron Stockmar to his side to take part in the deliberations as to the arrange-

ments for the Prince's establishment in England. 'I find them,' the King writes to Her Majesty, 'looking well, particularly Albert. It proves that happiness is an excellent remedy, and keeps people in better health than any other. He is much attached to you, and modest when speaking of you. He is besides in great spirits, full of gaiety and fun.'

The intimate communications which passed on this occasion between the Prince and Baron Stockmar seem to have convinced the latter that a most favourable development of the Prince's character had taken place within the short interval which had elapsed since they had separated at Milan. It was important, as he well knew, that the members of the Royal Household should be prepared to expect in the Prince a man entitled by his personal qualities to command their admiration, and able, in case of necessity, to compel their respect. He was therefore at pains to communicate the result of his observations to the Baroness Lehzen, than whom no one was more likely, from her position at Court, to be of service in preparing the way for the Prince being duly appreciated there. These were conveyed in a letter of the 15th of December, 1839, which is of peculiar interest, when read in the light of the Prince's subsequent career.

'With sincere pleasure I assure you, the more I see of the Prince the better I esteem and love him. His intellect is so sound and clear, his nature so unspoiled, so childlike, so predisposed to goodness as well as truth, that only two external elements will be required, to make of him a truly distinguished Prince. The first of these will be opportunity to acquire a proper knowledge of men and of the world; the second will be intercourse with Englishmen of experience, culture and integrity, by whom he may be made thoroughly conversant with their nation and Constitution. . . . As regards his future relation to the Queen, I have a confident hope, that they will make each other happy by mutual love,

confidence, and esteem. As I have known the Queen, she was always quick and acute in her perceptions, straightforward moreover, of singular purity of heart, without a trace of vanity or pretension. She will consequently do full justice to the Prince's head and heart; and, if this be so, and the Prince be really loved by the Queen, and recognised for what he is, then his position will be right in the main, especially if he manage at the same time to secure the goodwill of the nation. Of course, he will have storms to encounter, and disagreeables, like other people, especially those of exalted rank. But if he really possess the love of the Queen and the respect of the nation, I will answer for it, that after every storm he will come safely into port. You will therefore have my entire approval, if you think the best course is, to leave him to his clear head, his sound feeling, and excellent disposition' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 240).

The Duchess of Kent had from the first taken the Prince to her heart as a son; and, in answer to her letters, which had followed him from England, he wrote to her from Wiesbaden as follows:—

'Wiesbaden, 21st November, 1839.

'Dearest Aunt,—A thousand thanks for your two dear letters, just received! I see from them, that you are in close sympathy with your nephew—your son-in-law soon to be—which gratifies me very, very much. All you say strikes me as very true, and as emanating from a heart as wise as it is kind. I regret, as you do, that I have not still some months at command, to prepare myself for my new position—a position new to me in so many ways; yet what little time I have shall not fail to be turned to account, if they will allow me a moment's leisure in Coburg from other matters.

'What you say about my poor little Bride sitting all alone in her room, silent and sad, has touched me to the heart. Oh, that I might fly to her side to cheer her!

'You wish me to give you something I have worn. I send you the ring which you gave me at Kensington on Victoria's birthday in 1836. From that time it has never left my finger. Its very shape proclaims, that it has been squeezed in the grasp of many a manly hand. It has your name upon it; but the name is Victoria's too, and I beg you to wear it in remembrance of her and of myself.

'Our stay in Wiesbaden will be brief, for we expect to start for home the day after to-morrow. We stayed for a couple of hours in Bonn, visited our little old home there, and then gave a *déjeuner* to our old masters, who received us with great cordiality.

'Now farewell, dearest Aunt, and continue your love for

'Your devoted Nephew,

'ALBERT.'

For 'the poor little Bride' there was no lack of those sweet words, touched with the grateful humility of a manly love, to receive which was a precious foretaste to her of the happiness of the years to come. 'That I am the object of so much love and devotion,' the Prince writes to the Queen, from Wiesbaden the same day (21st November, 1839) 'often comes over me as something I can hardly realise. My prevailing feeling is, What am I, that such happiness should be mine? For excess of happiness it is for me to know, that I am so dear to you.'

Vague rumours of the brilliant destiny which awaited the Prince had preceded him to Coburg; but to all, except his own family, his lips were of course sealed as to this 'open secret' until the public announcement of the approaching marriage had been made in England. It must have been hard for the good people of Coburg to suppress their exultation during the interval, in which it appears by the following letter from the Prince to the Queen, they were kept in a state of tantalising suspense.

'Coburg, 30th November, 1839.

'You receive these lines from dear old Coburg, where I have been received with all possible cordiality. All are on the tiptoe of curiosity, anxious to know, and yet not daring to ask, and I am cruel enough to say nothing. This state of uncertainty, however, will not continue long. The next newspaper will probably bring the news of your declaration to the Privy Council, and then there will be a general outburst of joy among the people here.

'My poor dear grandmama is greatly touched by your letter. She is sadly depressed at the thought of parting from me. She says that since my mother's death she has not wept so much as in these last days; still she hopes, what I am convinced will be the case, that I may find in you, my dear Victoria, all the happiness I could possibly desire. And *so I shall*, I can truly tell her for her comfort. . . .

'Hitherto I have been teased and taken up with all sorts of preparations for leaving. But when Stockmar, who is to be here about three, arrives, I shall at once set to work to make a thorough study of the *Blackstone*, you have so kindly sent me.'

A few days later the Prince again writes to the Queen, and with characteristic misgiving as to his own merits.

'Coburg, 7th December, 1839.

'. . . So the secret is out, the affair made public, and to all appearance generally received with great satisfaction. This is a good omen for us. Here it has been no easy matter for some days back to keep the secret, and it is well we need do so no longer. That people entertain everywhere so good an opinion of me is not pleasant, for it fills me with uneasiness and apprehension, that when I make my appearance they will be bitterly undeceived not to find me what they expected.

'How often are my thoughts with you! The hours I was privileged to pass with you in your dear little room are the radiant points of my life; and I cannot even yet clearly picture to myself, that I am to be indeed so happy as to be always near you, always your protector.'

Another letter to the Duchess of Kent, from Coburg, presents a vivid picture of the Prince's mind at this moment.

'Coburg, 6th December, 1839.

'Dearest Aunt,—Accept my most hearty thanks for your dear note, which convinces me I am still often in your thoughts. What a multitude of emotions of the most diverse kind sweeps over and overwhelms me—hope, love for dear Victoria, the pain of leaving home, the parting from very dear kindred, the entrance into a new circle of relations, all meeting me with the utmost kindness, prospects the most brilliant, the dread of being unequal to my position, the demonstrations of so much attachment on the part of the loyal Coburgers, English enthusiasm on the tiptoe of expectation, the multiplicity of duties to be fulfilled, and, to crown all, so much laudation on every side, that I could sink to the earth with very shame! I am lost in bewilderment. I pack, arrange, give directions about pieces of property, settle contracts, engage servants, write an infinitude of letters, study the English Constitution, and occupy myself about my coming future.

'Ernest has left me, and gone to Dresden. I am not to see him in Coburg again.

'Everything is deep in snow, and I am tormented with a heavy cold. Forgive me, dearest Aunt, if what I write be rather confused. Just at present I am in that state myself. Not to weary you more, I take my leave, and remain,

'Your devoted Nephew,

'ALBERT'

From Dresden, to which Prince Ernest, as mentioned in this letter, had gone, he wrote to the Queen in terms, which form at once the finest commentary on the past life of his brother, and the best indication of its promise for the future.

'Dresden, 19th December, 1839.

'My dear Cousin,—Let me thank you very sincerely for your kind answer to my letter. You are always so good and so kind to me that I really fear I have not thanked you sufficiently.

'Oh! if you could only know the place you and Albert occupy in my heart! Albert is my second self, and my heart is one with his! Independently of his being my brother, I love and esteem him more than any one on earth. You will smile, perhaps, at my speaking of him to you in such glowing terms; but I do so that you may feel still more how much you have gained in him!

'As yet you are chiefly taken with his manner, so youthfully innocent—his tranquillity—his clear and open mind. It is thus that he appears on first acquaintance. One reads less in his face of knowledge of men and experience, and why? It is because he is pure before the world, and before his own conscience. Not as though he did not know what sin was—the earthly temptations—the weakness of man. No; but because he knew, and still knows, how to struggle against them, supported by the incomparable superiority and firmness of his character!

'From our earliest years we have been surrounded by difficult circumstances, of which we were perfectly conscious, and, perhaps more than most people, we have been accustomed to see men in the most opposite positions that human life can offer. Albert never knew what it was to hesitate; guided by his own clear sense, he always walked calmly and steadily in the right path. In the greatest difficulties that

may meet you in your eventful life, you may repose the most entire confidence in him. And then only will you feel how great a treasure you possess in him!

'He has, besides, all other qualities necessary to make a good husband. Your life cannot fail to be a happy one!

'I shall be very glad when the excitement of the first days is over, and all is again quiet, and when Papa shall have left England to be a distant and unintruding spectator of your new life. But how I shall then feel how much I have lost! Time will, I trust, help me also! Now—I feel very lonely!

'ERNEST.'

If the brother, with all the interest of opening manhood before him, felt thus 'lonely,' what was the state of the fond grandmother at Gotha, for whom nothing could replace the void thus created in her life? 'I am very much upset,' she writes to the Prince's father (12th December, 1839). 'The brilliant destiny awaiting our Albert cannot reconcile me to the thought that his country will lose him for ever! And for myself, I lose my greatest happiness. But I think not of myself. The few years I may yet have to live will soon have passed away. May God protect dear Albert, and keep him in the same heavenly frame of mind! I hope the Queen will appreciate him. I have been much pleased that she has shown herself so kind towards me, especially as I am sure I owe it all to the affection of my Albert. And yet I *cannot* rejoice.'

A few days previous to this letter, the official declaration of the intended marriage had been made with unusual solemnity at the Palace in Coburg. 'The day,' the Prince wrote to the Queen, 'affected me very much, as so many emotions filled my heart. Your health was drunk at dinner, where some 300 persons were present, with a tempest of huzzas. The joy of the people was so great that they went on firing

in the streets with guns and pistols during the whole night, so that one might have imagined a battle was going on.'

The joy thus expressed was coupled nevertheless with a wide-spread regret, that the country was to lose the presence of a Prince, who had made himself no less beloved than respected throughout the Duchies.

'These last days,' the Prince writes to the Queen, from Gotha, on the 28th December, 1839, 'have been very trying and painful for me. The day before yesterday I bade adieu to dear old Coburg; now it lies behind me, and we have arrived at Gotha. The extraordinary kindness everywhere shown me on my leaving increased the emotion I could not but feel at taking leave. There was quite a stream of people from all quarters to the palace, the last days I was there, to get another look at me; not a village but must send its delegate to town to express to myself the interest taken by the community in the coming event. I am usually (alas!) of a rather cold nature, and it needs a pretty strong appeal to move me, but to see so many eyes filled with tears was too much for me. Here I have been received with a grand illumination, and a torchlight procession of the civic body.'

And when the time came, as it did on the 28th of the following month, for the departure of the Prince to England, the prevailing feeling was most strikingly shown. It cannot be better described than in the words of General Grey, who had gone over with Lord Torrington with the Patent for investing the Prince with the Order of the Garter, and to accompany him to England.[5]

[5] 'The winter months of this year,' writes Frederick Perthes, under whom the Prince had studied at Bonn, in a letter published in his *Memoirs*, 'have been made interesting and exciting by the chapter of history which has been enacted here. For the Grand-Ducal Papa bound the Garter round his boy's knee, amidst the roar of 101 cannons. The earnestness and gravity with which the Prince has obeyed this early call to take an European position, give him dignity and standing, in spite of his youth, and increase the charm of his

'The departure from Gotha was an affecting scene, and everything showed the genuine love of all classes for their young Prince. The streets were densely crowded; every window was crammed with heads, every housetop covered with people, waving handkerchiefs, and vying with each other in demonstrations of affection that could not be mistaken. The carriages stopped in passing the Dowager Duchess's, and Prince Albert got out with his father and brother to bid her a last adieu. It was a terrible trial to the poor Duchess, who was inconsolable for the loss of her beloved grandson. She came to the window as the carriages drove off, and threw her arms out, calling out "Albert, Albert!" in tones that went to every one's heart, when she was carried away, almost in a fainting state, by her attendants' (*Early Years*, p. 297).

whole aspect. Queen Victoria will find him the right sort of man; and unless some unlucky fatality interpose, he is sure to become the idol of the English nation—silently to influence the English aristocracy—and deeply to affect the destinies of Europe.'

CHAPTER IV.

MEANWHILE some incidents had occurred in England which were calculated to give the Prince an impression that a somewhat rough experience awaited him in his future home.

Lord Melbourne's anticipation that the announcement of the marriage would be well received was fully realised. The nation hailed with pleasure the union of their Sovereign with a Prince whom universal report proclaimed worthy of her choice. Nor was it less welcome because it promised to sever finally the connection between England and Hanover, and the very unpopular Hanoverian Monarch, who, failing the Queen, would have ascended the English throne.

No time had been lost after the Coburg Princes left England in summoning the Privy Council to receive the formal announcement of the betrothal. They met on the 23rd of November at Buckingham Palace, eighty in number. Wearing a bracelet with the Prince's portrait, 'which seemed to give her courage,' as the Queen's *Journal* records, Her Majesty read to the Council the declaration of her intention to contract a union, which, she expressed her strong conviction, 'will at once secure my domestic felicity, and serve the interests of my country.' Some tidings of the purpose for which the Council had met had reached the public, and on leaving the Palace Her Majesty was greeted by the crowds outside with even more than usual cordiality.

A still more interesting and trying ordeal had to be passed

through by the Queen, in making the formal announcement of the approaching marriage from the throne. This was done at the opening of Parliament on the 16th of January following. Enthusiastic crowds lined the streets along the route from Buckingham Palace to Westminster; and the brilliant throng which filled every corner of the House of Lords thrilled with an emotion as intense as it was unwonted, while the youthful Sovereign with clear and unfaltering voice announced the intention to form that alliance on which the future happiness of her life was to rest. On every side the announcement was received with the warmest congratulations and demonstrations of sympathy; and Sir Robert Peel spoke the prevailing sentiment when, in supporting as leader of the Opposition the Address of Congratulation which followed, he said, 'Her Majesty has the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection. I cordially hope that the union now contemplated will contribute to Her Majesty's happiness, and enable her to furnish to her people an exalted example of wedded happiness.'

Baron Stockmar had arrived in England on the 9th of January, to settle, as the representative of the Prince, the terms of the treaty of marriage, and the arrangements for the Prince's future household. On the latter point the Prince had, in a letter to the Queen on the 10th of December preceding, declared his wishes in terms which show how completely, even at this early period, he had adopted the important principle, from which he never afterwards swerved, of having always the best men about him, and of belonging to no party. 'I should wish particularly,' he says, 'that the selection should be made without regard to politics, for if I am really to keep myself free from all parties, my people must not belong exclusively to one side. Above all, these appointments

should not be mere "party rewards," but they should possess some other recommendation besides that of political connection. Let the men be either of very high rank, or very accomplished, or very clever, or persons who have performed important services for England. It is very necessary they should be chosen from both sides—the same number of Whigs as of Tories; and above all it is my wish that they should be men well educated and of high character, who, as I have said, shall have already distinguished themselves in their several positions, whether it be in the army or navy, or the scientific world. I am satisfied you will look upon this matter precisely as I do, and I shall be much pleased if you will communicate what I have said to Lord Melbourne, so that he may be fully aware of my views.'

It was a great disappointment to the Prince to learn that he was to have as his Private Secretary Mr. Anson, who had been nominated for the office by Lord Melbourne, whose private secretary he had long been. This seemed to the Prince to place him at the very outset of his new career in a false position towards the Tories and the public. But the appointment caused him much pain on private grounds, forcing as it did an entire stranger upon him in a relation necessarily of the closest intimacy, when he had every right to expect he would be permitted to choose for himself. 'Think of my position,' he wrote to the Queen (18th December, 1839), 'I am leaving my home with all its old associations, all my bosom friends, and going to a country in which everything is new and strange to me—men, language, customs, modes of life, position. Except yourself, I have no one to confide in. And is it not even to be conceded to me, that the two or three persons, who are to have the charge of my private affairs, shall be persons who already command my confidence?' On every ground, therefore, the Prince expressed his decided disapproval of the appoint-

ment; but matters had already gone so far that he had no alternative but to give way—a decision which, thanks to the admirable conduct of Mr. Anson, he had no occasion to regret. This gentleman's independence of all party bias was clearly shown not long afterwards, upon the fall of Lord Melbourne's administration, and his entire devotion to the service and interests of the Prince and Crown—notwithstanding a certain narrowness in his views on many important subjects, in marked contrast to the wider grasp and more liberal character of the Prince's mind—soon won, as it retained for him till his death, in October, 1849, not only the entire confidence, but the warm friendship of his master. With regard to the other appointments of the Prince's household, the same rule was observed as in that of the Queen, those only being permanent which were held by men wholly unconnected with politics, while the others, only two in number—those of Groom of the Stole and one lord in waiting—changed with each change of Ministry.

Lord Palmerston had told Baron Stockmar on his arrival that of all the possible alliances he chiefly approved the marriage with the Prince. This opinion, which was that generally entertained, was only qualified by a doubt not unnaturally felt by some, whether he was not too young. Gossip and malice were, of course, not silent; and while some were spreading a report that the Prince was a Roman Catholic, others were not less active with insinuations that he was a radical and an infidel. Unfortunately, as the event proved, the declaration of the marriage to the Privy Council had been silent as to the fact of his being a Protestant Prince. Her Majesty's advisers might well have been excused for the omission, in the face of the notorious fact, that he belonged to that branch of the Saxon family which at and ever since the Reformation had not only been conspicuous for its antagonism to Rome, but had lost the greater part of

its possessions through its attachment to the Protestant cause. Neither was it to be thought, that Her Majesty could be regardless of the equally well-known penalty which, as Lord Brougham had afterwards to remind the House of Lords, made the Sovereign's marriage with a Roman Catholic an *ipso facto* forfeiture of the Crown.[1] But in all great transactions it is a sound rule, to take nothing for granted, to leave no room for misunderstanding; and in the prevailing heated temper of men's minds it would have been unquestionably wiser to have made cavil impossible.[2]

King Leopold, more shrewd than Her Majesty's Ministers in his estimate of popular prejudices, expressed the opinion strongly in a letter to the Queen (6th December, 1839), that the mention of the Prince's being a Protestant could do no harm, while its omission would 'give rise to interminable growling. On religious matters,' he added, 'one cannot be too prudent, because one can never see what passionate use people will make of such a thing.' The Melbourne Cabinet, however, adhered to its opinion, and the same omission in the Declaration to the Houses of Parliament led to discussion in

[1] The same rule applies to every member of the Royal Family.

[2] The following extract from a letter by the Prince to the Queen (7th December, 1839) will be read with interest, as bearing on this subject:—

'In accordance with your wish, we have set about the preparation of an historical sketch of the progenitors of our House, so as to show at once their position towards the Reformation and Protestantism. It is not yet complete, but it shall be sent with my next letter; and demonstrate, that to the House of Saxony Protestantism, in a measure, owes its existence, for this House and that of the Landgrave of Hesse stood quite alone against Europe, and upheld Luther and his cause triumphantly. This shows the folly of constantly assailing our House as Papistical. So little is this the case, that there has not been a single Catholic Princess introduced into the Coburg family since the appearance of Luther in 1521. Moreover, the Elector, Frederick the Wise of Saxony, was the very first Protestant that ever lived. That you may know and judge for yourself, dear Victoria, what my creed and religious principles are, I send you a confession of faith which I worked out for myself in 1835, and which I then publicly avowed and swore to in our High Church. I enclose an English copy, and the original as I then wrote it. You will see my hand is somewhat changed since then.'

both Houses, and in the House of Lords to a motion, which was successfully made by the Duke of Wellington, for the insertion of the word 'Protestant' in the Congratulatory Address to the Queen. It was significant of the excited state of both public and party feeling, that the Duke charged the Ministry with having made the omission through fear of alienating their Irish supporters, and urged the adoption of his amendment on the ground that 'it would give Her Majesty's subjects the satisfaction of knowing that Prince Albert was a Protestant—thus showing the public that this is still a Protestant State.'

The disposition to raise exceptions was not likely to be quieted by this or any other assurance. Whether prompted by ignorance or malice, an uneasy feeling on the subject of the Prince's creed had got abroad; and a few days later Baron Stockmar received a letter from Lord Palmerston, written 'in great haste,' to ask 'whether Prince Albert belonged to any sect of Protestants whose rules might prevent his taking the Sacrament according to the ritual of the English Church' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 341). But for Stockmar's prompt assurance, given in the most unqualified terms, that not only did the Prince not belong to any sect, but that there was no essential difference between the Communion Services of the German Protestant and the English Churches, 'God knows,' he says, 'with the prevailing fanaticism, what horrible absurdity might not have resulted.'

Still more unpleasant were the discussions which arose on the subject of the Annuity to be settled on the Prince upon his marriage.

In the cases of Queen Caroline, wife of George II., Queen Charlotte, wife of George III., Queen Adelaide, wife of William IV., and in the more closely analogous case of Prince Leopold on his marriage with the Princess Charlotte, 50,000*l.* a year had been the sum granted for their

privy purse. Following these precedents, this sum was adopted without misgiving by Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, in entire forgetfulness of the fact, that the days had gone by when such votes might be expected to pass as matters of course. Moreover, the great commercial distress, which happened then to exist throughout the country, made it far from unlikely that the proposal should pass unchallenged on the present occasion. It was obviously on all accounts desirable to avoid opposition on a matter of so much delicacy. And avoided it might probably have been, had the leaders of the Opposition been judiciously approached from the other side—a step which might well have been taken in a matter that in no way bore upon their political differences. Unfortunately this course was not pursued, and the vote was submitted to the House of Commons (27th January, 1840) without previous concert, although with the full knowledge that it would certainly be opposed.

In the temper in which the debate was conducted on both sides, the interests of the Prince and the natural feelings of the Queen were in some measure forgotten. Insinuations on the Ministerial side of want of loyalty and respect to the Crown were ill calculated to induce the opposite party to forego their opposition; neither was that opposition likely to be modified by the suspicion, that the party in power would not be sorry at an adverse vote, which might have the effect of creating a feeling of distrust on the part of the Prince, and of soreness on that of the Queen, towards their political rivals. The result was, that after a motion by Mr. Hume to reduce the annuity to 21,000*l.* had been negatived, an amendment was carried, by 262 to 158, on the motion of Colonel Sibthorp, supported by Sir Robert Peel and several leaders of the Opposition, reducing it to 30,000*l.* Lord Melbourne, always candid, if not cautious, did not himself attribute his defeat to his

political adversaries merely. 'The Prince,' he said to Stockmar, a few days afterwards (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 346), 'will be very angry at the Tories. But it is not the Tories only whom the Prince has to thank for cutting down his allowance. It is rather the Tories, the Radicals, and a great proportion of our own people.'

The Prince, however, was not angry with the Tories, and did not for a moment allow what had passed to influence his future conduct. He was at Aix-la-Chapelle, on his way to England, when he learned the result of the debate. A misgiving crossed his mind, and caused him no little distress, that the English people were not pleased with the marriage. But, fortunately, he found awaiting him at Brussels a letter, prompted by the sympathetic thoughtfulness of Stockmar, with full details of what had taken place, and, what was of more importance, with an impartial statement of the causes, in no way personal to himself, which had led to the miscarriage of the vote. The Prince, with his wonted clear perception and cool judgment, at once appreciated the position; and replied to Stockmar, that his only regret was to find that his ability to help artists and men of learning and science, to which he had been looking forward with delight, would be necessarily more restricted than he had hoped.

On the same day (27th January) on which this mortification was prepared for the Prince by the House of Commons, the Ministry sustained a defeat in the other House, which was calculated to affect much more deeply the feelings of his expectant Bride, as well as of himself, concerning as it did the question of rank and precedence which he was to enjoy as her husband.

The miscarriage of the measure proposed for this purpose was also probably due in a great degree to want of management and reasonable foresight on the part of the Government.

It involved a question of much nicety and of general importance, quite beyond the special case with which it proposed to deal, and therefore no ordinary care was demanded for its preparation. No provision has been made by the English Constitution for the title and precedence of the husband of a Queen Regnant, while the wife of a King has the highest rank and dignity after her husband assigned to her by law. Whether this arises from oversight, or whether the question has been deliberately left to be regulated by the law and usage, which in England gives to the wife the status of her husband, with all its incidents, but does not give the husband the rank or status of his wife, it is unnecessary to inquire. Clearly the exceptional circumstances of the marriage of a Queen Regnant demand an exceptional treatment. It can neither be consistent with her happiness nor her dignity, that the status or precedence of her husband should be so undefined, as to expose herself, on the one hand, to the possible inconvenience and pain of having it disputed by her own children, or by other members of the Royal Family; or to subject her Consort, on the other, to the embarrassment of holding his position in this country solely by her grace and favour, while out of the country he may find it altogether ignored, and himself separated from her, by whose side it should be his right, as it is his duty, to stand. It is no doubt always in the power of a Queen Regnant to give to her Consort precedence, at home, over all her subjects by placing him next her person, but here her power stops. The status is due to her personal favour, and, if acknowledged by other Royal personages, it is so by courtesy merely.

It is obvious that such a state of things must give rise, as in the case of Prince Albert it did give rise, to serious inconvenience;[3] and that it would have been well, once and

[3] 'When I first married, we had much difficulty on this subject, much bad feeling was shown, several members of the Royal Family showed bad grace

for all, to have fairly met the question, and settled it by statute. This course, however, was not pursued. No pains were even taken by the Ministry to ascertain the views of the House, and to remove whatever objections might be felt to the measure, imperfect as that was, on which they had resolved. Nay, they committed the grave mistake of not meeting the question frankly and openly, but dealt with it incidentally in what professed to be simply a Bill for the Naturalisation of the Prince. To such a Bill, had it enacted no more than was expressed in its title, no objection could possibly have been raised. But it also contained a clause giving to the Prince precedence for life next after Her Majesty in Parliament or elsewhere as Her Majesty might think proper. The omission in the title of the Act was, no doubt, merely an oversight, but it was sufficient to justify the Duke of Wellington in moving the adjournment of the discussion on the Bill because of the very large powers which it proposed to confer on the Queen, of which the House had no previous notice. The Duke was supported by Lord Brougham, who went further and opposed the principle of this part of the measure, on the ground that the power to fix the Prince's rank, according to constitutional precedent, rested not with

in giving precedence to the Prince, and the late King of Hanover positively resisted doing so. . . . When the Queen was abroad, the Prince's position was always a subject of negotiation and vexation: the position accorded to him the Queen always had to acknowledge as a grace and favour bestowed on her by the Sovereigns whom she visited. While, in 1850, the Emperor of the French treated the Prince as a Royal personage, his uncle declined to come to Paris, because he would not give precedence to the Prince; and on the Rhine, in 1845, the King of Prussia would not give the place to the Queen's husband, which common civility required, because of the presence of an Archduke, the third son of an uncle of the reigning Emperor of Austria, who would not give the *pas*, and whom the King would not offend. The only legal position in Europe, according to international law, which the husband of the Queen of England enjoyed, was that of a younger brother of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and this merely because the English law did not know of him. This is derogatory to the dignity of the Crown of England.'—MEMORANDUM BY THE QUEEN, May, 1856.

the Crown, but with Parliament. Here, moreover, he contended, if the measure passed, this anomaly might arise, that the Prince, supposing him to survive the Queen without issue, might take precedence of a Prince of Wales. These objections were felt to be so serious, that the postponement of the discussion was agreed to by the Ministry.

When the discussion was resumed four days afterwards, the second of Lord Brougham's objections was met, by the intimation that the precedence to be given to the Prince was intended to be 'next after the Heir Apparent.' This, however, Lord Brougham wished to be still further limited by its being confined to the lifetime of Her Majesty; and although the Bill passed the second reading with little further discussion, it was thought expedient, when it went into Committee on the 3rd of February, to confine it to the object expressed in the title—the simple naturalisation of the Prince—leaving the question of precedence to be dealt with by the exercise of the Royal Prerogative. It was so dealt with a few days afterwards (5th March), with the concurrence of the leaders of both parties, by Letters Patent, which provided that the Prince should thenceforth 'upon all occasions, and in all meetings, except when otherwise provided by Act of Parliament, have, hold, and enjoy place, preeminence, and precedence next to Her Majesty.' No distinctive title was, however, assigned to the Prince; and it was not till 1857 (2nd July) that the title and dignity of Prince Consort were granted to him by Royal Letters Patent, long after that name had been conferred upon him by the spontaneous voice of the nation.

These incidents were no pleasant prelude to the Prince's appearance in England. They could not fail to cause considerable pain and vexation to the Queen at the time. But so far as the Prince was concerned, as has been truly said, 'he soon understood the nature of our political parties, and

that the proceedings in Parliament were only the result of high party feeling, and were by no means to be taken as marks of personal disrespect, or of want of kind feeling, towards himself' (*Early Years*, p. 289). His anxiety to assure the Queen, that what had occurred would cause him no permanent chagrin, is apparent by what he wrote to Her Majesty from Brussels (1st February, 1840) while still smarting under the first painful impression: 'You can easily imagine the very unpleasant effect produced upon me by the news of the truly most unseemly vote of the House of Commons about my annuity. We came upon it in a newspaper at Aix, where we dined. In the House of Lords, too, people have made themselves needlessly disagreeable. All I have time to say is, that, while I possess your love, they cannot make me unhappy.'

If any trace of disquietude as to the popularity of the marriage had remained in his mind, it must have been thoroughly dispelled by the enthusiastic welcome which awaited him from the moment he set foot upon English ground. It met him at Dover, where he landed on the 6th;[4] it followed him along the route to Canterbury, where he passed the evening of the 7th, and continued with ever-increasing ardour until he alighted at Buckingham Palace on the afternoon of the 8th. The greetings of the English people are never given in a half-hearted way; and if the cheers of the crowds, who streamed out from every town, village, and hamlet along the route, and who thronged the avenues of the Palace all that day and the next, had a more

[4] It is thus the Prince writes to the Queen from Dover (7th February, 1840): —'Now am I once more in the same country with you. What a delightful thought for me! . . . . It will be hard for me to have to wait till to-morrow evening. Still our long parting has flown by so quickly, and to-morrow's dawn will soon be here. . . . . Our reception has been most satisfactory. There were thousands of people on the quays, and they saluted us with loud and uninterrupted cheers. Torrington thought he had not for many a day seen a heartier reception. . . . . To-day we proceed as far as Canterbury.'

cordial ring than usual, what wonder, when all saw in the well-graced and distinguished presence of the Prince the fairest promise for the home happiness of their Queen and for the prosperity of her reign? 'Un beau visage est le plus beau de tous les spectacles,' says La Bruyère; and this is never more strongly felt than by a multitude, especially if predisposed to yield to the charm, as in the present case it was sure to be, by the knowledge that this marriage was not one of political convenience, but of pure affection. 'It is this,' as Lord Melbourne afterwards said to the Queen, 'which makes your Majesty's marriage so popular;' and it was this which, kindling a response in every heart, gave the warmth of a direct personal interest to the feeling with which the Prince was everywhere regarded.

The favourable impression spread still more widely, as what was seen of him, both in public and in private, within the next few days, became generally known; and Stockmar was able to record a few days afterwards, as the result of his anxious observation: 'The Prince is liked.' 'Those who are not carried away by party feelings like him greatly.' All hearts, in particular, were won by the calm grace and thoughtful dignity of his deportment during the trying ordeal of the ceremony on the 10th at the Chapel of St. James's Palace.[5] On the morning of that eventful day—

[5] How it was with the Queen we are told by an observer of no common penetration, the Dowager Lady Lyttelton, who, in her capacity of one of Her Majesty's Ladies in Waiting, had peculiar facilities for observation: 'The Queen's look and manner,' she writes, a few days after the ceremony, 'were very pleasing; her eyes much swollen with tears, but great happiness in her countenance; and her look of confidence and comfort at the Prince, when they walked away as man and wife, was very pleasing to see. I understand she is in extremely high spirits since. Such a new thing for her to *dare* to be *unguarded* in conversing with anybody; and with her frank and fearless nature the restraints she has hitherto been under, from one reason or another, with everybody, must have been most painful.' For this and other valuable extracts from Lady Lyttelton's letters, to be hereafter cited, we are indebted to the kindness of her family to whom they were addressed.

rich in what it brought in successful love and in the promise of a noble future—the Prince's thoughts reverted for a time to her, to whose affection his youth had owed so much; and, as though he were once more a child at her knee, his heart found relief in imploring her blessing on the most solemn act of his life, in these few and pregnant words:—

'Dear Grandmama,—In less than three hours I shall stand before the altar with my dear Bride. In these solemn moments I must once more ask your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which will be my safeguard and my future joy! I must end. God help me!

'Ever your faithful

'GRANDSON.'

'London, 10th February, 1840.'

The Prince wrote a similar letter to his stepmother. There is surely something peculiarly touching in the 'God help me!' of this letter. How completely it speaks of that habit of living consciously 'in the great Taskmaster's eye,' by which the Prince was distinguished. Not many weeks before (22nd December, 1839), in writing to the Queen, that in an hour he was to take the Sacrament in the church at Coburg, he had written, 'God will not take it amiss, if in that serious act, even at the altar, I think of you, for I will pray to Him for you, and for your soul's health, and He will not refuse us his blessing.'

The morning of the marriage had been wet, foggy, and dismal, but the day was not to want the happy omen of that sunshine which came afterwards to be proverbially known as 'Queen's weather.' Soon after the return of the bridal party from the Chapel, the clouds passed off, the sun shone out with unusual brilliancy, and the thousands who lined the roads from Buckingham Palace to Windsor Castle, to see the Sovereign and her husband as they passed, were more

fortunate than those who had crowded the avenues of St. James's Palace in the morning, heedless of rain and cold, to witness the bridal procession on its way to and from the Chapel.

After a three days' stay at Windsor Castle, the Queen and Prince returned to London, for the discharge of the necessary public duties. On the 28th the Duke of Coburg, who along with the Hereditary Prince had accompanied Prince Albert to England, left London to return to Germany. The parting was greatly felt by the Prince. It brought vividly home the rupture which had now inevitably taken place with the affections and associations of his past life. 'Ernest,' he said to the Queen, 'was now the only one remaining here of all his earliest ties and recollections,'[6] and from him also he must soon be separated. His childhood and youth had been most happy; he loved his father deeply; he had all a good man's attachment to the country of his birth, and he had left behind him there many a spot and many a face to which he could henceforth only look back with a fond regret. 'But,' says the same frank record, 'if I continued to love him as I did now, I could make up for all. . . . Oh, how did I feel for my dearest precious husband at this moment! Father, brother, friends, country—all has he left, and all for me. God grant that I may be the happy person, the *most* happy person, to make this dearest, blessed being happy and contented! What is in my power to make him happy I will do.'

Whatever the burden life may lay upon a man, however the strength may sometimes fail, and the spirit wax weary, he cannot be accounted otherwise than most happy who can turn for light and solace and encouragement to a love which finds its utterance in words like these. 'There cannot exist

[6] The Queen's *Journal*, quoted in *Early Years*, p. 312.

a dearer, purer, nobler being in the world than the Prince,' were the Queen's words in writing to Baron Stockmar the day after her marriage. This faith, this devotion, never failed the Prince from that moment, in sunshine or in storm, and never did their worth become less precious to him than in these first hours of wedded confidence.

CHAPTER V.

'A PRINCE,' says Jean Paul Richter, 'can never contemplate soon enough the Tabor of the throne, so that in after years he may be gloriously transfigured upon it, and not hang as a cloud upon the mountain.' That it was in this spirit the Prince had from the first regarded the duties of the position in which he was now placed, has been already seen. But even he, with all his sagacity and forethought, could scarcely have fully pictured to himself the difficulties with which that position was beset, the strain which it would impose upon his prudence and self-denial, the sacrifice of the ties of his past life, which it could not fail to involve.

Amid the general enthusiasm with which he was welcomed in England, murmurs of jealousy and distrust were certain to be heard. There were some who, on purely selfish grounds, deprecated the marriage of the Queen with any but an English Prince; others who then, and for many years afterwards, were eager to surmise danger in the influence of a foreign Prince upon the counsels of the Crown; and not a few who, from the mere antagonism which purity and nobleness of life are sure to create, lost no opportunity of giving a false colour to his actions, and a false gloss to his intentions.

These, however, were but the necessary incidents of his exalted position, which he must have foreseen and made up his mind to endure, until malice should be silenced and misunderstanding cleared away by the indisputable facts of his life. But the real difficulty of his task, being what he was

by nature, and by the deliberate purpose which he had set before himself, lay elsewhere. A man of so much originality and force of character could never be satisfied to be less than the master of his position—a force felt and recognised in the private and public life of the Court. But to be this, and at the same time to conciliate, or, if need were, to subdue all the influences, both within and without the Palace, which could scarcely fail to be actively arrayed against him, was the problem of his life, and at no time did it press more heavily upon him than at the outset of his career.

Although the husband of the Queen, the law—to use Her Majesty's words quoted above (p. 62)—took cognisance of him as 'merely the younger son of the Duke of Coburg.' Thus, while ostensibly occupying the most brilliant position in the kingdom, his right of precedence was open to be disputed, and was disputed by a few members of the Royal Family, who made no secret of their disappointment that Her Majesty's choice had not fallen upon some scion of the reigning House in whom they had a nearer interest. A more pressing source of disquietude, however, existed in the fact that the Prince possessed no independent authority by right of his position, and could exercise none, even within his own household, without trenching upon the privileges of others, who were not always disposed to admit of interference. This could scarcely fail to embarrass his position in the midst of a vast royal establishment, which had inherited many of the abuses of former reigns, and where he found much of which he could not approve, but yet was without the power to rectify. And as behind every abuse there is always some one interested in maintaining it, he could not but be aware, that he was regarded with no friendly eyes by those who were in that position, and who naturally dreaded the presence among them of one so visibly intolerant of worthlessness and *incapacity*.

A mistake, it was soon found, had also been committed in

not establishing the Prince from the first as Private Secretary of the Queen, and placing the internal arrangements of the Royal Household under his immediate control. These functions had, since the Queen's Accession, been to a great extent discharged by the Baroness Lehzen, Her Majesty's former governess, and they invested her with powers which, however discreetly used, were calculated to bring her into collision with the natural head of the household. It is due to this lady to say, that genuine affection for Her Majesty, who for so many years had been the object of her care, and who was attached to her by ties of gratitude and regard for kindness and counsel in her girlhood when they were most needed, very probably blinded her to the obvious truths, that her former influence must, in the natural course of things, give way before that of a husband, especially of a husband so able and so deeply loved, and that, in the true interests of her Royal pupil, she should herself have been the first to desire that the offices she had hitherto filled should be transferred to the Prince.

The painful situation, in which he found himself, through this not having been done, is indicated by a passage, quoted in *The Early Years*, from one of his letters to Prince von Lowenstein so early as May 1840: 'In my home life I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is, that I am only the husband, and not the master in the house.' This was a state of things which manifestly could not long continue; and it was brought all the more quickly to an end by the very unwise efforts made to abridge the natural authority and influence of the Prince as 'master in the house.' These, it has already been made known,[1] were not confined to attempts to exclude him from participation in public affairs, but were aimed so far as to deny him 'even in the domestic circle that authority which

[1] *Early Years*, p. 319.

in private families belongs to the husband, and without which there cannot be true comfort or happiness in domestic life.'

There could be but one conclusion to such impolitic attempts to disturb the natural relations of husband and wife, and to keep up a separation of interests and duties between the Queen and the Prince, bound together as they were by ties of the most intimate and daily increasing confidence and affection. The instinct of the woman, through which love runs into and triumphs in obedience, was sure to assert its supremacy over that desire of power, which we are too apt to assume must grow from the very exercise of it into a paramount passion. The marriage vow 'to obey,' as well as 'to love and honour,' could have but one meaning for the Queen. It was a 'sacred obligation which she could consent neither to limit nor refine away.' It had made them one, and she lost no opportunity of making it felt, that as one they must be regarded,—one in heart and purpose, and, except in her purely regal functions, one in authority. Still, enough has been said to show that the position of the Prince was one that demanded from him the utmost discretion and forbearance. In these qualities, however, he was never wanting; and the natural force of circumstances effected in due time the removal of every obstacle to his legitimate authority.

Not less delicate was the Prince's task in fixing the line to be taken by him with regard to public affairs. If he cared nothing for politics in 1838, as Baron Stockmar tells us was the case, the indifference might well be excused. For one still so young, and with so wide a range of tastes, the world of science, physical and mental, of natural history, and of art, was surely enough to engross all his faculties of observation and of thought. His mind, moreover, was of the class which declines instinctively to deal with practical questions, except on the secure basis of well-ascertained facts. Of the world of diplomacy and politics he knew enough to be aware, that

such a basis was not within the reach of the younger son of the House of Coburg. 'En fait d'histoire contemporaine,' it has been said by M. Van de Weyer (*Pensées diverses*), whose experience gives peculiar value to the remark, 'il n'y a de vrai que ce qu'on n'écrit point.' The Prince was more likely, therefore, to think his time better spent in mastering those broad universal principles, which have been developed in the history of former governments and peoples, than in entering upon the study or discussion of contemporary politics, where he was without the knowledge either of the actors in the political arena, or of the controlling circumstances, which was essential for arriving at satisfactory conclusions.

But from the moment he was called to occupy the place nearest to the throne of England, he passed into a sphere where indifference to politics would have been inexcusable, as, indeed, for such a man it would have been impossible. Endowed, as his subsequent career proved, with all the qualities for governing, he could not be an idle spectator of the stirring events, and great political controversies and changes, in the midst of which he all at once found himself. Opinions, and very decided opinions, upon all matters of policy, both foreign and domestic, he could not fail to have; and, instead of resting in indifference, the eager interest which he must inevitably feel, where questions of such enormous magnitude were at issue, was more likely to hurry him into that open expression of opinion, that anxiety to mould the current of events in accordance with their convictions, which is to be looked for in all vigorous thinkers. From the first, however, the Prince appreciated the extreme delicacy of his position, and laid down for himself the rule, that no act of his should by possibility expose him to the imputation of interference with the machinery of the State, or of encroachment on the functions and privileges of the Sovereign. At the same time he formed an equally clear view of his duty to qualify himself

thoroughly for supporting the Sovereign by his advice, and this, it is scarcely necessary to remark, involved the most assiduous attention to every subject, whether at home or abroad, in which the welfare of her kingdom was involved. While renouncing, therefore, every impulse of personal ambition, he resolved to consecrate himself with the most absolute devotion to deepening, by the influences of his life, and the example of his home, the hold of the Monarchy upon the affections of the People, and to making it a power, which, amid the conflicting and often selfish passions of political strife, and the tortuous subtleties of diplomacy, should have for its unswerving object to increase that people's welfare and to uphold the power and dignity of the Empire.

The principle upon which he acted in carrying out this resolution, as expressed by himself ten years later, in his letter to the Duke of Wellington, declining to entertain the offer of the command of the Army, cannot be too clearly kept in view in reading the story of his life. It was 'to sink his own individual existence in that of his wife—to aim at no power by himself, or for himself—to shun all ostentation—to assume no separate responsibility before the public—to make his position entirely a part of hers—to fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously to watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment in any of the multifarious and difficult questions brought before her, political, or social, or personal'—to place all his time and powers at her command 'as the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, her sole confidential adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the Government, her private secretary, and permanent minister.'

It is not, of course, to be supposed that these views could

be carried into effect all at once, although they very early assumed a definite shape. The Prince had to feel his way along a path where every step was beset with difficulty, and open to the shot of adverse criticism. In the affection and clear practical judgment of the Queen he found his best ally; but he was also supremely fortunate in having by his side, in Baron Stockmar, a man specially fitted by nature and by experience to direct his course, and to assist and encourage him amid the difficulties by which it was surrounded.

Nowhere in the records of history has Royalty been served with a devotion so purely noble and unselfish as that of this remarkable man to the Queen and the Prince. Something of this has already been indicated in previous chapters. It was a devotion founded on genuine respect for the fine qualities of heart and head which he had proved in both, and he sacrificed to it for many years, without a murmur, the personal ease and love of retirement, which his weak health and studious habits made almost a necessity of his life. Rank, patronage, fortune, fame, all the usual motives for intellectual toil, had no attraction for him. In his relations to the English Court, he had no object of his own to serve, save only that first object of all noble natures, to do the utmost good within his power. Circumstances had thrown him strangely for the second time across the path of the heiress to the throne of England, and seemed thus to indicate the sphere where the gathered experiences of his life and the mature fruits of his thought might be applied with the most advantage. He could not, therefore, resist the appeal made to him by the Prince in the letter already quoted (*supra*, p. 41), 'to sacrifice his time to him for the first year of his life in England;' and, if he was drawn on to extend the sacrifice into future years, it was because on his side the interest in the task he had set before himself grew deeper and deeper as the noble qualities of his pupil developed and expanded, whilst

on the other every day's experience proved to the Prince and the Queen the inestimable value of his counsels in their family no less than in their public life.

Speaking of Stockmar to Sir Robert Peel in 1841, Lord Liverpool said, that in all he did for the Queen and the Prince, 'his only object was their welfare, his only ambition was to be of service to them' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 361); but it might truly have been added, that these motives would never have acted so strongly as they did, had he not considered that their welfare could not be advanced, nor their interests served, without at the same time furthering the welfare and advancing the glory of England. Had he been an Englishman, indeed, he could not have had the country's interests more nearly at heart. In England he had spent the best years of his life, where his position in Prince Leopold's household had been most favourable for the study of the social and political life of the country. He knew its people well in their strength and in their weakness. No man better understood the spirit of the Constitution, or foresaw with a more prophetic eye the modifications of it which were sure to be demanded by the advance of popular opinion, and the rapidly altering conditions of society. The country, moreover, was dear to him as the stronghold of political freedom, and he would have regarded as a disaster to mankind anything which might have lowered its prestige, or weakened it as an example to the other nations of the world.[2] His experience as a diplomatist and politician was already con-

[2] 'I love and honour the English Constitution from conviction,' Stockmar writes to the Prince, 26th January, 1854, 'for I think that, under judicious handling, it is capable of realizing a degree of legal civil liberty which leaves a man free scope to think and act as a man. Out of its bosom singly and solely has sprung America's free Constitution, in all its present power and importance, in its incalculable influence upon the social condition of the whole human race; and in my eyes the English Constitution is the foundation-, corner- and cope-stone of the entire political civilisation of the human race, present and to come.'

siderable, for, as the confidential friend of King Leopold, he had taken an active part in some of the most important political movements of his time. He was thoroughly initiated in the relations of all the great European Cabinets and States. Of his capacity for dealing with great public questions, it is enough to say, that Lord Palmerston spoke of him to Bunsen, 'as one of the best political heads he had ever met with,' and that by Bunsen himself he was 'honoured as one of the first statesmen of Europe.' In the ordinary affairs of life his knowledge of men and shrewd practical sense might always be relied on; while at the same time a high moral standard, and strong religious convictions, in which there was no leaven of sectarianism, gave a commanding weight and elevation to his character and counsels.

Bunsen's Life, vol. ii. p. 189; *Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 526.

Being what we have described him to be, the fact that he was a foreigner was of positive advantage to his position as a confidential adviser of the Prince. He was more likely to survey the whole world of English life, and English politics, without the bias of passion or prejudice which it must always be hard for an Englishman to escape, and he could also preserve an attitude of absolute independence, which is scarcely possible for a subject, however fearless and sincere, and however frankly and cordially his views may be solicited and welcomed. Whatever ought to be told, whatever advice, however ungracious, ought to be urged, no consideration would induce him to withhold. That he should speak freely, was the condition of his friendship. Right was right—truth, truth—before King or Prince, no less than before the meanest of their people. Indeed, for them right and truth were of dearer import, and sincerity of more priceless worth, than for other men.

'If you are consulted by Princes to whom you are attached,' he said to a man of distinguished eminence in political life, from whose Memoranda we are permitted to

quote,[3] 'give your opinion truthfully, boldly, without reserve or reticence. Should your opinion not be palatable, do not, to please or conciliate him, deviate for a moment from what you think the truth. You may in consequence be some time out of favour, treated with neglect or coldness; and when they come back (for back they will come, if you remain honest and firm), never complain of the treatment you have received, never try to make them own how right you were, and how wrong they have been. It must be enough for you that you should, for their good and the good of the country, act upon the principles, the soundness of which is thus acknowledged.'

While this noble sincerity only served to endear him the more to the Queen and the Prince, the other qualities by which it was accompanied placed him on the securest footing with all the great leaders of English party life. 'How is it,' says the same authority, 'that Stockmar had such a permanent influence upon men so different in so many respects as Lord Aberdeen, Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Palmerston, Sir Robert Peel, &c.? It was not only because they recognised his great political ability and his perfect disinterestedness, but because they all felt that they were *in safe hands;* that he would never betray them, show up their foibles, their errors, their faults, play off one political man against another, join in any backstair intrigue, and avail himself of his position to undermine them in the opinion of the Sovereign or the public, and diminish their political usefulness! How many instances I could quote of the support given by him to men whom he disliked the most!'

It was in every way important to the Prince, that, during the first years of his presence in England, he should have at his command the counsels of a friend so wise, and so wholly free from all party bias. Baron Stockmar supplied the

[3] His Excellency the late M. Silvain Van de Weyer.

knowledge of men and things, of English habits and feelings, of the position of political parties, of the character of their leaders, of the questions—social, political, and religious—which were coming up for discussion, and of the various forces by which public opinion was modified and controlled, as to all which it was of the utmost consequence that the Prince should be promptly as well as accurately informed.

The time was one of great political agitation at home, while our relations abroad were full of complexity and trouble. A succession of bad harvests since 1836 had sent up the price of provisions to an alarming extent, while languishing manufactures and a general stagnation of trade had so greatly lowered the scale of wages as to make the pressure of high prices all but intolerable. Pauperism prevailed throughout the kingdom to an extent hitherto unprecedented. Profiting by the discontent among the labouring classes which under such a state of things was inevitable, Chartist agitators had roused the passions of their ignorant followers to the highest point of irritation, and the fruits of their teaching were shown in insurrectionary risings throughout the country. The attempted rising at Newport in South Wales in 1839 revealed the existence of a widespread organisation for the establishment by fire and sword of their visionary Charter upon the ruins of the Constitution. That the apprehensions on this score were well founded was only too clearly shown by the occurrences at Birmingham in July of the same year, which provoked from the Duke of Wellington in his place in Parliament the remark, that 'he had seen as much of war as most men; but he had never seen a town carried by assault subjected to such violence as Birmingham had been during an hour by its own inhabitants.' The vigour with which these outbreaks were put down prevented similar efforts elsewhere; but the feelings of discontent in which they originated still smouldered, and from time to time

showed themselves in strikes and combination riots of a very violent character both in England and Scotland.

In Ireland, again, the condition of things was complicated by circumstances peculiar to the country. What was called agrarian outrage, but was, in plain language, a deliberate system of cold-blooded and cowardly assassination, prevailed to such an extent, that among the miserable facts as to the state of the country brought forward by Mr. Stanley, (afterwards the late Lord Derby) in Parliament in 1839, was this appalling one, that in the year 1838, in eleven counties, exclusive of Tipperary, there were 277 committals for murder, and only three convictions. Amid all this violence and bloodshed the cry for Repeal of the Union was persistently kept up by O'Connell, who, under the profession of claiming no more than equality for Ireland, did not hesitate to support demands, which no one knew better than himself meant dismemberment of the Empire, by menaces of a kind which feeble followers in his footsteps have since made familiar: 'Refuse us this,' he had said, 'and then, in the day of your weakness, dare to go to war with the most insignificant of the Powers of Europe.'

Speech of O'Connell, March 6, 1839, at Meeting in Dublin of the Precursor Association.

Such a menace had a peculiar significance at the time it was made. Our armaments by sea and land were then notoriously inadequate. Canada had recently been in revolt. Our West India Colonies were a source of pressing anxiety. We had on our hands a formidable war in Affghanistan, and were involved in hostilities with China. A nearer cause of anxiety, however, existed in the uneasy state of our relations with France, with which country a rupture soon afterwards became imminent upon what was called the Eastern Question.

Early in 1840 this question had entered upon a phase, that threatened to result in the break-up of the *entente cordiale* between the two countries, which the government of Louis Philippe had for so many years shown an ostentatious

anxiety, and had, no doubt, a real desire, to cultivate and maintain. The point at issue was indeed of the most serious character. On the one hand France, originally under the guidance of Marshal Soult, and subsequently of M. Thiers, aimed at securing, through its support of Mehemet Ali in his revolt against the Sultan, a *quasi* control and patronage of Egypt. Its purpose was very clear; and, indeed, it was avowed at a late stage of the proceedings by M. de Rémusat in the French Chambers, as being 'to establish a second-rate maritime power in the Mediterranean, whose fleet might unite with that of France, for the purpose of serving as a counterpoise to that of England.' Such a purpose was not likely to escape the penetrating eye of Lord Palmerston, then at the head of Foreign Affairs, and he set himself to defeat it on the broad ground, that 'the Mistress of India could not permit France to be mistress, directly or indirectly, of the road to her Indian dominions.' The policy of England, with a view to securing not only her own position, but also the peace of Europe, was directed to placing Turkey under the protectorate of the five great European Powers. In this France had all along been invited to join. Instead, however, of doing so, M. Thiers set on foot negotiations having for their object a separate treaty between France and the Ottoman Porte, which would have vested in the former the sole protectorate of Turkey. While still pushing his approaches in this direction, he suddenly found to his discomfiture that he had been countermined.

See Lord Dalling's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, vol ii. p. 351.

Ibid. p. 293.

A Treaty signed on the 15th of July, 1840, between the four great Powers of Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England on the one side, and Turkey on the other, for a joint protectorate of the latter country, was the first intimation to the French Minister that the question had passed beyond the region of diplomatic *finesse*. But, instead of accepting with a good grace a defeat which it was very obvious could not

be repaired. M. Thiers afforded a fresh illustration of the familiar truth embodied in Dryden's line, 'They never pardon, who have done the wrong.' Outwitted in a manœuvre at once selfish and dangerous to the peace of the world, he adopted a tone of indignation for a fancied injury. 'France had been insulted, a great European question had been settled without her and in spite of her. The position of Mehemet Ali was now a secondary affair, French honour was a primary one, and France would demand, and, if necessary, insist in arms on some satisfaction.'

It was in vain to answer, Wherein lay the insult? France had herself to blame, if the Eastern Question had been settled without her. There was no wish to exclude her from the arrangement. It was still open to her to become a party to the Treaty, to the principle of which in the earlier stages of the question she had herself given her adhesion. The mingled tone of grievance and menace continued to be kept up and echoed in the French press; and the countries seemed to be on the very brink of war, when the good sense of Louis Philippe, acted upon by the vigorous representations of his son-in-law King Leopold, averted the catastrophe.

M. Thiers retired from office on the 20th of October, 1840. He was succeeded by M. Guizot, and the apprehensions came to an end which had for many months agitated all who were responsible for the protection of English interests. How great these were may be gathered from a few playful words of the Queen in a letter, on the 16th of October, 1840, to King Leopold: 'I think our child ought to have, besides its other names, those of Turko-Egypto, as we think of nothing else.'

The anxiety consequent upon this state of things at home and abroad was aggravated by the fact, that since 1836 the revenue had shown an annual deficit, which in 1840 had risen to over 1,500,000*l*. When the accounts of 1841 showed a

still larger balance against revenue, the growing dissatisfaction of the country with a Ministry which had for some time been unable to command the hearty support even of its own party, became manifest in dwindling majorities, and other unmistakeable symptoms, that the reins of government must soon pass into other hands. However willing Lord Melbourne might be to do the best for his party, and to go all reasonable lengths for the purpose of maintaining it in power, he was too clear-sighted not to be fully aware, that the days of his Administration were numbered, and too candid and loyal not to feel it to be his duty to prepare the way for the event by diminishing as far as possible the long-standing estrangement between the Court and the leaders of the Tory party, still further embittered as it was by the incidents attending Sir Robert Peel's failure to form a government in 1839. He knew from what had passed on the occasion of Mr. Anson's appointment, how determined the Prince was to maintain an attitude of absolute neutrality between Whig and Tory. Here was precisely the spirit, which Lord Melbourne must have seen had not been hitherto sufficiently cultivated, and he sought an early opportunity of intimating that it had his cordial concurrence. On the 20th of February, 1840, Stockmar writes, 'Melbourne told me that he had already expressed to the Prince his opinion, that the Court ought to take advantage of the present moment to treat all parties, especially the Tories, in the spirit of a general amnesty' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 351). To the Queen his language was the same—'You should now hold out the olive branch a little.'

CHAPTER VI.

It will thus be seen, that amid the festivities, the levees, drawing-rooms, presentations, addresses, and other public ceremonials which followed closely upon the Royal Marriage, and were the means of introducing the Prince to the public life of the Court, there was a multitude of subjects of the gravest national importance, which called urgently for his attention, and were likely to engage his most anxious study. The strain upon him in all ways during these first months was necessarily great, coming as he did from a life of comparative quiet and seclusion to one where every moment was crowded with an ever-shifting variety of novel objects, and where the early hours and simple habits of his past life were an impossibility. 'I find it very difficult,' he writes (27th February, 1840), 'to acclimatise myself completely. The late hours are what I find it most difficult to bear.' Again, writing a few days afterwards (9th March), he says, 'It is not to be told what a quantity of presentations I have' (he had received and personally answered no fewer than twenty-seven two days before), 'and how many people I must become acquainted with. I cannot yet remember the faces, but this will come right.' The impression produced by his appearances in public was most favourable. 'The Prince is liked,' writes Stockmar on the 14th of February, and again on the 26th, 'Those who are not carried away by party feelings like him greatly. He behaves in his difficult position extremely well' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 351).

During this early period, and for some years afterwards, the Prince kept up assiduously, what the pressure of public duties, as the years went on, compelled him in a great measure to forego, the active practice of the arts of design, as well as of music. Both in painting and in musical composition he had acquired considerable technical skill; and in the etcher's art the Queen and himself found a delightful occupation for their scanty leisure. To sing and play together was also one of their constant recreations. To the Prince music was at all times a source of supreme delight, an element in which the hindrances and disappointments and shortcomings of life were forgotten. In it he found a vent for all that world of deeper emotion, for which it is given to few to find an adequate expression in words. His favourite instrument was the organ. His hands were full of power, and he had acquired sufficient mastery in execution to enable him to make this noblest of instruments the eloquent exponent of his thoughts and fancies. To it he could speak out his heart, with no fear of being misunderstood, and with how much power he did so we see by the effect he produced, when he must have been unconscious that he was heard.

Thus, on the 9th of October, 1840, Lady Lyttelton writes from Windsor Castle:—

'Yesterday evening, as I was sitting here comfortably after the drive, by candlelight, reading M. Guizot, suddenly there arose from the room beneath, oh, such sounds! . . . . It was Prince Albert, dear Prince Albert, playing on the organ; and with such master-skill, as it appeared to me, modulating so learnedly, winding through every kind of bass and chord, till he wound up into the most perfect cadence; and then off again, louder and then softer. No tune, and I am too distant to perceive the execution or small touches, so I only heard the harmony, but I never listened with much more pleasure to any music. I ventured at dinner to ask him what I had heard: "Oh, my organ! a new possession of mine. I am so fond of the organ! It is the

first of instruments; the only instrument for expressing one's feelings." (I thought, are they not good feelings that the *organ* expresses?) "And it teaches to play; for on the organ a *mistake!* Oh, such misery!" and he quite shuddered at the thought of the sostenuto discord.'

Ten years later, at Osborne (22nd July, 1850) the same eloquent listener records the effect produced upon her, on happening again to hear the Prince speaking out his soul through his favourite instrument. It had then much more to tell, and the effect was proportionately deeper:—

'Last evening such a sunset! I was sitting gazing at it, and thinking of Lady Charlotte Proby's verses, when from an open window below this floor began suddenly to sound the Prince's organ, expressively played by his masterly hand. Such a modulation! Minor, and solemn, and ever-changing, and never-ceasing. From a piano, like Jenny Lind's holding note, up to the fullest swell, and still the same fine vein of melancholy! And it came on so exactly as an accompaniment to the sunset. How strange he is! He must have been playing just while the Queen was finishing her toilette, and then he went to cut jokes, and eat dinner, and nobody but the organ knows what is in him, except, indeed, by the look of his eyes sometimes.'

As the Prince's devotion to Art soon became known, he was called upon to take a prominent part in its encouragement before the public. So early as March he was appointed one of the Directors of the Antient Concerts, and directed his first concert in this capacity on the 29th of April. His selection of the music for the occasion was made with great care, and he attended an elaborate rehearsal of it with the Queen two days before. This concert has peculiar interest as the first of a very remarkable series directed by the Prince, which, with what was done by him elsewhere, gave a stimulus to the cultivation of classical music, and of musical art generally in England, that has been of the highest value

in raising the public taste.[1] He also made it his study to acquaint himself with whatever was being done in the sister arts of painting and sculpture, and laid the foundation for that active part which he subsequently took in spreading throughout the kingdom the love and appreciation of these arts, in which it was then conspicuously deficient.

At the same time he early let it be seen that he shared the public interest in the questions of the day, by presiding on the 1st of June at a public meeting to promote the Abolition of the Slave Trade, where by a few concise and weighty sentences he gave a foretaste of that power of saying much in a few words, for which his Speeches and Addresses soon became remarkable. It was his creed, that representing as he would be held to do the personal opinions of the Sovereign, no word to be spoken by him on public occasions should be left to the chance of the moment, but that all should be well considered and presented in the best possible form. This speech, therefore, brief as it was, was, like its successors, carefully written and committed to memory. 'He was very nervous,' says the Queen, 'and had repeated his speech in the morning to her by heart' (*Early Years*, p. 341). Cicero himself, as we know, in the height of his fame, shuddered visibly over his whole body, when he began to speak. In the Prince's case, a nervousness, which is inherent in all great speakers, was very naturally heightened by the circumstance that he had to speak in a foreign language, before many thousands of eager listeners, whose good opinion he was specially desirous to conciliate. 'My speech,' he informs his father with obvious satisfaction a few days afterwards, 'was received with great applause, and seems to have produced a good effect in the country.'

[1] The best evidence of this will be found in the List, printed in the Appendix (A), of the pieces selected by the Prince for performance at The Antient Concerts and those of the Philharmonic Society.

A few days later a rude shock was given to the prevailing happiness and serenity of the Royal life. As the Queen and the Prince were driving up Constitution Hill in a low droschky, Her Majesty was twice fired at by a young man of the name of Oxford. Though happily neither shot took effect, there was no doubt that the wretched creature knew perfectly well what he was about, and acted, so far as intentions can be judged by acts, with a murderous intent. It would have been well, as events proved, if he had been dealt with upon this footing. The plea of insanity, however, was set up, and effect having been given to it by the jury, he was committed to a lunatic asylum for life. The best commentary on the lenity thus shown was pronounced by Oxford himself, on being told of the similar attempts of Francis and Bean in 1842, when he declared 'that, if he had been hanged, there would have been no more shooting at the Queen.' 'My chief anxiety,' writes the Prince, 'was lest the fright should have been injurious to the Queen in her present state.' It might well have been so; and the knowledge of this gave special fervour to the enthusiasm with which the Queen and the Prince were greeted wherever they appeared for some time afterwards.

The hope of an heir indicated by the Prince made it necessary that a Regency Bill should now be prepared, to provide for the possible event of the Queen's death, leaving issue. In the case of the Princess Charlotte, Prince Leopold had been named Regent, and it was Her Majesty's wish that this precedent should be followed in her own case. But after what had taken place in Parliament in the discussions on the Prince's allowance and the Naturalisation Bill, there was some reason to fear a miscarriage of the measure, unless a preliminary understanding were come to with the political leaders of the Opposition, more especially as it was known that the Duke

of Sussex was hostile to the appointment of the Prince as Regent, and desired a Council of Regency, of which the Duke himself should be a prominent member. To avert, if possible, any such result, Baron Stockmar took the matter in hand. Communications were opened with Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, and every difficulty was smoothed away; all parties agreeing that, as the father was the natural guardian, the Regent 'could and ought to be nobody but the Prince.' A Bill to this effect was accordingly introduced by the Lord Chancellor (13th July), and passed both Houses, with only the dissentient voice of the Duke of Sussex, who declared it to be matter of conscience with him to register his protest against it.

To the Prince this result was of the greatest importance. It affirmed the status which so recently there had seemed a great inclination to deny him, and it thus afforded the strongest proof, how well he had come to stand with both parties in politics. 'The Tories are very friendly to me, as I to them,' he writes to his father on the 4th of July; and on the 2nd of August, when announcing the safe carriage of the Bill, he expresses a well-earned gratification, 'That not a single voice was raised in opposition in either House, or in any one of the newspapers' (*Early Years*, p. 352). This was entirely due, Lord Melbourne told the Queen, to the Prince's own character: 'Three months ago they would not have done it for him.'

When he had seen this important object happily accomplished, Baron Stockmar's thoughts were turned to his quiet home in Coburg. 'This Act once passed,' he wrote, 'my business here is at an end for the present, perhaps for ever.' It was very far from being so; but it was with this feeling that he left England in the beginning of August, addressing, as he did so, the following letter to the Prince:—

'August 4, 1810.

'Dear and Honoured Prince,—I cannot leave England without bidding you once more the warmest, heartiest farewell. I have had much talk with Anson; he seems an excellent fellow, and sincerely devoted to you. God grant it may be so, for no man—not even the highest—can go through this life without the love and loyalty of those about him. Be you, too, however, on your part a *true friend* to those who are attached to your household. Keep watch over the *moral* and *physical* health of the Queen. Never lose self-possession or patience; but, above all, at no time, and in no way, fail in *princely worth and nobleness*.

'STOCKMAR.'

The tie of mutual affection and respect, which had by this time been established between Baron Stockmar and the Prince was of the closest kind. The Prince, too diffident, as Stockmar had constantly to remind him, of his own powers, naturally turned for guidance to the Mentor whose sagacity had never failed him; while Stockmar on his part, to use his own language, had come to love the Prince as a son. The relation was kept up during the next few months by an active correspondence, in the course of which Stockmar lost no opportunity of pressing upon the Prince the high ideal of duty and conduct which he had chalked out for him. That his admonitions were welcomed is the best evidence of the response which they found in the Prince's own nature; as his after life was the proof, how well he turned them to account. On the 2nd of September the Baron writes:

'Dear Prince,— . . . I am satisfied with the news you have sent me. Mistakes, misunderstandings, obstructions, which come in vexatious opposition to one's views, are always to be taken just for what they are,—namely, natural

phenomena of life, which represent one of its sides, and that the shady one. In overcoming them with dignity, your mind has to exercise, to train, to enlighten itself; it has to acquire, in dealing with them, practical intelligence and insight, and your character to gain force, endurance, and the necessary hardness. That for the present I have but little new to add to what, since I have known you more intimately, my heart has felt for you, but have merely to reiterate what I have already said, is a proof that the estimate I had formed of you was correct. Never to relax in putting your magnanimity to the proof; never to relax in logical separation of what is great and essential from what is trivial and of no moment; never to relax in keeping yourself up to a high standard,—in the determination daily renewed to be consistent, patient, courageous, and worthy.

'One day on my way up the Rhine I was made very sad, but only for a short time, by reading in a newspaper that you had had a bad fall from your horse. At that moment I felt how sincerely I love you.'

Again writing on the 13th of September following, Stockmar, in reference to the part to be taken by the Prince at the Board of the Duchy of Lancaster, on which he had for some time sat as representing the Queen, warns him against that dissipation of the mind in details, which would have been fatal to one on whose higher faculties there were so many claims.

'In reference to the Duchy of Cornwall, in what you do I advise you to avoid going too deep into details, which will only bewilder you. It is for you, to give the impulse merely, to establish sound principles, and this once done, to hold fast in everybody's despite to those principles with steel-like sternness.'

Some general remarks in other parts of the same letter are interesting from the light which they throw upon the Prince's character. The proposition that true love and true loyalty are the acutest as well as the most unsparing critics will commend itself for a truth, which in general is too little appreciated.

'The stars which are needful for you just now, and perhaps for some time to come, are *Love*, *Honesty*, *Truth*. All those whose minds are warped, or who are destitute of feeling, *will be apt to mistake you*, and to persuade themselves and the world that you are not the man you are or at least may become, and that people are not only entitled to rate you low, but even to treat you slightingly. It is only love and loyalty that are keen-sighted, because they seek the truth; they find excuses only where excuse should be made; they only wait in patient hope for what can be developed by loving fosterage alone, and not even by that until the time is ripe. Do you therefore be on the alert betimes, with your eyes open in every direction, and strive calmly but surely to form a just estimate of the minds of those around you. This done, to the pure in soul lay your heart open and establish between them and yourself a relation truly reciprocal—love for love, warmth for warmth, truth for truth. Those, on the other hand, who are impure, keep at arm's length, and do this with proper firmness and resolution.

'My cordial good wishes for your twenty-first birthday. I wish for my good Prince a great, noble, warm, and true heart, such as shall serve as the richest and surest basis for the noblest views of human nature, and the firmest resolve to give them development.

'The letter which I received from the Queen since I came here has given me extreme pleasure. It was written in a happy mood, and there was consequently more cheerfulness

in it, more contentment, more heart, than I have ever seen her show before. God bless you, God keep you in health, God surround you with good, pious men, from whom you may learn practically and by deeds that human happiness is only to be found on the path of love and goodness! . . .'

This letter reached the Prince at Windsor Castle, to which the Court had removed, when Parliament rose on the 11th of August. Some difficulty had been apprehended as likely to take place at the Prorogation, which was made by the Queen in person, as to the place to be occupied by the Prince on that occasion. None, however, arose. The Prince occupied, as he did on all future occasions, the seat next the throne. It seems the Duke of Sussex and others were disposed to question the right of the Prince to occupy his natural place beside the Queen both in the House of Lords, and on the way there. Had any interference been attempted, the common sense and good feeling of the country would very speedily have settled the question. 'I told you it was quite right,' said the Duke of Wellington, speaking to the Queen a few days afterwards, 'Let the Queen put the Prince where she likes, and settle it herself—that is the best way.'[2]

At Windsor the Prince was in his element. He hailed with delight the change to its fine air and magnificent woodland scenery, from the heavy smoke-polluted atmosphere of London, doubly oppressive to him who had been nurtured in the pure crisp air of Thuringia. 'I feel,' were his own

[2] The Great Duke had not much toleration for the traditions of Court etiquette when they conflicted with the dictates of common sense. The late Lord Albemarle, when Master of the Horse, was very sensitive about his right in that capacity to sit in the Sovereign's carriage on state occasions. 'The Queen,' said the Duke, when appealed to for his opinion, 'can make Lord Albemarle sit at the top of the coach, under the coach, behind the coach, or wherever else Her Majesty pleases.'

words, 'as if in Paradise in this fine fresh air.' He could there enjoy comparative retirement,—a great relief after having been followed, as he was in London, by crowds of people wherever he showed himself. It was also possible to give fuller play to his love of natural history,[3] and to his genius, inherited from his father, for landscape gardening, which soon made itself felt in the improved beauty of the pleasure-grounds around the Castle. 'I am now,' he writes to his father on the 14th of August, 'forming a pretty little stud of all the Arab horses which Victoria has received as presents. . . That long green space below the Terrace where the old trees stand, not under, but on the top of the hill, is to be laid out in pleasure-grounds, with plants, &c., and I shall occupy myself much with it. It gave me much trouble to get this settled, as it did before to prevent the destruction of the fishing temple and George IV.'s Cottage, which were to have been taken away. These are now safe.'

On the 26th of August his birthday was celebrated at Windsor by a family fête, the first of the series of happy anniversaries, which were always made by the Queen and himself the means of drawing still closer the ties of family affection. He missed the greetings, however, of the old familiar voices which had hitherto been associated with the day. 'This is the first time,' he writes to his father on the 27th, 'that I have not heard these good wishes from your own lips. . . . My thoughts yesterday were naturally much at the Rosenau.'

The Prince availed himself of the comparative repose of Windsor to commence a series of readings on the Laws and Constitution of England with Mr. Selwyn, the very distin-

[3] One of his first efforts in this direction was the improvement of the beautiful park-like gardens of Buckingham Palace. 'I have enlivened it,' he writes (11th June, 1840), 'with all sorts of animals and rare aquatic birds.' *Early Years*, p. 342.

guished author of the standard work on *Nisi Prius*. His 'quick intelligence, and diligent attention,' as well as his 'readiness in seizing the points of resemblance between English and German jurisprudence,' were always spoken of by Mr. Selwyn in the highest terms. While engaged in this study he read along with the Queen Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*. On the 11th of September he was made a Member of the Privy Council.

At this period, also, the Prince, who had been lately appointed to the Colonelcy of the 11th Hussars, went out occasionally with a squadron of the 1st Life Guards in Windsor Park, in order to make himself acquainted with English drill and the words of command.

By this time the Eastern Question had passed into its most critical phase. The anxiety of the Queen and the Prince was aggravated by the divided views which prevailed in the Cabinet,[4] feeling as they did, how mischievous would be the effect, if it were to break up in presence of the attitude of menace which had been assumed by France. From the first the Queen, acting on Lord Melbourne's advice, had communicated all foreign despatches to the Prince.[5] This question had therefore long occupied his closest attention; and certainly there was no subject, which from the magnitude and complication of the interests involved, was better fitted to initiate him into the practical science of European diplomacy. In this point of view it was an experience of the utmost value to the Prince. Such, at least, was the view taken of it by Baron Stockmar, and it found expression in a letter to the Prince on the 8th of September.

[4] As this fact has been very fully stated in Lord Dalling's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, reserve on the subject is no longer necessary.

[5] 'Victoria,' he writes to his father (August, 1840), 'allows me to take an active part in Foreign affairs, and I think I have done some good. I always commit my views to paper, and then communicate them to Lord Melbourne. He seldom answers me, but I have the satisfaction of seeing him act entirely in accordance with what I have said.'

'. . . . Continue,' writes the Baron, 'to take upon yourself and to discharge cheerfully the friendly offices which good feeling and courtliness of heart prescribe, even although they cause you some trouble and discomfort. The reputation of cordial courteousness is in your position not merely a great material advantage, it is also proof of a fine disposition. . . . .

'Lord Russell is, as you remark, a genuine kernel in an unpromising shell. I would fain hope, that on closer acquaintance, he will learn to love and prize you.

'Whatever Mr. Selwyn may be,[6] if you only listen attentively, and apply yourself to the study regularly and continuously, I anticipate good results for you.

'Eastern affairs will keep Europe in a state of ferment for some time to come, lead to manifold diplomatic vagaries, and consequently change their aspect oftener than the moon. You, my dear Prince, will acquire much true insight by following their course with attention; and a close study of the despatches communicated to you by the Premier, besides the exact knowledge thus conveyed, will beget in you a taste for general politics, which is quite indispensable for the duties of your vocation. . . . .

'Continue, dear Prince, to insist upon honour, integrity, and order in your household. This inspires respect, and gives a good example and warning to others. Believe me, a character and disposition like yours must be surrounded by none but the good, the loyal, and the well-disposed At your present time of life you must have nothing to say to churlish, commonplace, repellent, or unconscientious people. Such characters, as indeed you say yourself, will only dwarf and drag you down. You must be fostered, developed, and

[6] This refers to a remark in a letter from the Prince to Stockmar, 'that he had no fault to find with Mr. Selwyn, but a want of method.'

strengthened for a time at least, by love and attachment, by unselfish and warm sympathy. . . . .

'With true respect and devotion,

'Your Royal Highness's

'Most obedient Servant,

'STOCKMAR.'

In November Stockmar came back to London on the urgent solicitation of the Prince, who was naturally anxious to have him at hand on the first accouchement of the Queen.[7] His skill as a physician was of the first order, and he had even before his return from Coburg been kept informed of the preliminary arrangements. On the question of the selection of a nurse, he writes to the Prince on the 1st of October: 'Impress upon Anson the necessity for conducting this affair with the greatest conscientiousness and circumspection; *for a man's education begins the first day of his life*, and a lucky choice I regard as the greatest and finest gift we can bestow on the expected stranger.'

On the 13th of November the Court returned to Buckingham Palace, where on the 21st the Princess Royal was born. 'For a moment only,' the Queen says, 'was the Prince disappointed at its being a daughter and not a son.'

All had gone as well as possible; but Stockmar, mindful probably of the sad catastrophe which he had witnessed at Claremont twenty-three years before,[8] sent the following note to the Prince in the course of the day:—

[7] In one of Lady Lyttelton's letters of this period, the following record occurs of a conversation, in which the Prince's familiarity with the English Liturgy, and his sound feeling, are alike conspicuous. 'Lord W. asked if a prayer for the Queen's peculiar circumstances should be added. Prince: No, no, you have one already in the Litany—"all women labouring of child." You pray already five times for the Queen. It is too much.—Lord W.: Can we pray, Sir, too much for Her Majesty?—Prince: Not too *heartily*, but too often.'

[8] The death of the Princess Charlotte in childbed, 6th November, 1816. Till within an hour or two of her death, the Princess had made such progress,

'November 21, 1840.

'My dear, dear Prince,—Once more I thank God for the gracious protection vouchsafed to us; I pray that it may be continued, and again wish you from the bottom of my heart all happiness in having become a father. Suffer me, moreover, again to remind you, that sleep, stillness, rest, and the exclusion of many people from her room are just now the all in all for the Queen. You cannot be too guarded on these points. Be, therefore, a very Cerberus. You ought not yourself to be too much about the Queen just now, for your being near or talking with her may be too exciting. Although the Queen is now apparently so well, this ought not to lull us into careless security, for any agitation, but especially any excitement, too much speaking, &c., may bring on fever and dangerous consequences. Therefore, once again, the greatest prudence!!

'Ever with respect and devotion,

'Your Royal Highness's faithful

'STOCKMAR.'

During the time the Queen was laid up, Her Majesty records in a Memorandum, which has already been made public (*Early Years*, p. 365), the Prince's care and devotion were quite beyond expression. He refused to go to the play or anywhere else, generally dining alone with the Duchess of Kent, till the Queen was able to join them, and was always at hand to do anything in his power for her comfort. He was content to sit by her in a darkened room, to read to her, or write for her. 'No one but himself ever lifted her from her bed to her sofa, and he always helped to wheel her on her bed or sofa into the next room. For this purpose he would come instantly when sent for from any part of the

that the Ministers and others who had been summoned to Claremont, left it believing that all danger was past, but they could scarcely have reached London before she was dead

house. As years went on and he became overwhelmed with work (for his attentions were the same in all the Queen's subsequent confinements), this was often done at much inconvenience to himself; but he ever came with a sweet smile on his face. In short,' the Queen adds, 'his care of her was like that of a mother, nor could there be a kinder, wiser, or more judicious nurse.'

His care on this occasion was requited by the rapid and uninterrupted recovery of the Queen, and the Court was able to return for the Christmas holidays to Windsor Castle. All was happiness there. The war cloud had passed away, which for many months had loured on the political horizon, and the dear delights of home had been made more precious by the young life, which now gave it a new and tenderer charm. Christmas was the favourite festival of the Prince, who clung to the kindly custom of his native country, which makes it a day for the interchange of gifts, as marks of affection and good will. The Queen fully shared his feelings in this respect, and the same usage was then introduced into their home, and was ever afterwards continued. Christmas-trees were set up in the Queen and the Prince's rooms, beside which were placed the gifts with which each took pleasure in surprising the other, while similar trees were set up in another room with the gifts for the household.

On the 23rd of January, 1841, the Court returned to Buckingham Palace for the meeting of Parliament, which was opened by the Queen in person on the 26th. An entry from Her Majesty's *Journal* on the 22nd is eloquent, in the fulness of happiness which it expresses, of regret at returning to the crowded and more artificial life of town:—

'I told Albert that formerly I was too happy to go to London and wretched to leave it, and how, since the blessed hour of my marriage, and still more since the summer, I dislike and am unhappy to leave the country, and could be

content and happy never to go to town. This pleased him. The solid pleasures of a peaceful, quiet, yet merry life in the country, with my inestimable husband and friend, my all in all, are far more durable than the amusements of London, though we don't despise or dislike those sometimes.'

On the 10th of February, the anniversary of the Queen's marriage, the Princess Royal was baptized at Buckingham Palace, by the names Victoria Adelaide Mary Louisa. The Sponsors were the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, represented in his absence by the Duke of Wellington,[9] the King of the Belgians, the Queen Dowager, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duke of Sussex. Lord Melbourne created some amusement by remarking of the Princess to the Queen next day, 'How she looked about her, quite conscious that the stir was all about herself. This is the time the character is formed!' a quaint gloss upon Stockmar's view, already quoted, 'That a man's education begins with the first day of his life.'

The day previous the Prince had met with an accident while skating (a favourite amusement with him) on the sheet of water behind Buckingham Palace. 'My fright,' the Queen says, 'was indescribable,' but it will be seen from the following letter by the Prince (12th February, 1841) to the Dowager Duchess of Gotha, that this did not prevent Her Majesty from showing her wonted helpfulness in the emergency:—

'Buckingham Palace.

'The cold has been intense. . . . . Nevertheless, I managed, in skating, three days ago, to break through the ice in Buckingham Palace Gardens. I was making my way to Victoria, who was standing on the bank with one of her

[9] Speaking of the Christening, the Queen told Lord Melbourne, that if the Duke of Coburg could not come, the Prince and herself intended the Duke of Wellington to represent him. This pleased Lord Melbourne very much, as he knew it would flatter the Duke, and he added, 'Indeed the Duke is the best

ladies, and when within some few yards of the bank I fell plump into the water, and had to swim for two or three minutes in order to get out. Victoria was the only person who had presence of mind to lend me assistance, her lady being more occupied in screaming for help. The shock from the cold was extremely painful, and I cannot thank Heaven enough, that I escaped with nothing more than a severe cold. They had, it seems, broken the ice recently at that particular spot, and it had frozen over again, so that it was impossible to distinguish the place. . . . .

'The Christening went off very well. Your little great-grandchild behaved with great propriety, and like a Christian. She was awake, but did not cry at all, and seemed to crow with immense satisfaction at the lights and brilliant uniforms, for she is very intelligent and observing. The ceremony took place at half-past six P.M., and after it there was a dinner, and then we had some instrumental music. The health of the little one was drunk with great enthusiasm.

'I can scarcely realise the fact, that I have already been married a year and two days; and it brings the sad truth afresh to my mind, that we have been so long separated from each other. I hope, however, to see you either here or at Ostend. Uncle Leopold, who is very well, will, alas! not remain with us long. To me his being here is a great pleasure.

'The little girl bears the Saxon Arms in the middle of the English, which looks very pretty.'

friend we have.' The Queen's *Journal*. Only a few nights before, the Duke had warmly supported the Ministerial policy on the Eastern Question, in the House of Lords, where it had been sharply attacked by Lord Brougham, as endangering the French alliance.

CHAPTER VII.

It will be seen from the following letter that Baron Stockmar left England early in 1841, well satisfied with the development of the Prince's character, and with the progress made in establishing his position both within the Palace and before the country. But Stockmar was not of the easy disposition that feels assured of results, while they are yet only half achieved. He had set his mind upon a very high ideal for the Prince; and while encouraging him by his sympathy and approval, past successes only stimulated him to call upon the Prince to exert, more strenuously than ever, his powers of self-discipline and of perseverance:—

'Coburg, 7th May, 1841.

'I went, agreeably to my promise, on the first of this month, to Gotha. During two days I had the honour of seeing your Grandmama three times. I found her cheerful and well, eager for information, and so our chief topic of conversation was Your Royal Highness, and your position in England. I had in this way frequent occasion to observe this lady's sound judgment, her upright and honourable nature, and her truly motherly love for yourself. To keep up a lively and affectionate intercourse with this exemplary Princess is sure to have a beneficial influence on your own mind. . . .

'What I have seen during the time I have recently passed with you, strengthens me in the hope of achieving more or less the ideal for your future, which I set up for myself

twenty months since. Let us but cleave devoutly but unceasingly to high thoughts and noble purposes, and Heaven's blessing will not fail to attend us! *Not outward show—but Truth and Reality be the aim.* Only through self-knowledge can way be made. It is, however, a laborious and arduous business, and one that will have its share of troubles. It requires a man not to spare his own flesh, but to cut into his own faults as well as other men's. And yet it is only in this way that moral excellence and a character to be revered can be reached, and without these Your Royal Highness may say good-by for ever to any real success.

'When I recall to mind the manifold and serious difficulties, as they stood before us a year and a half ago, and the insignificant means at our command for overcoming them, I am bound to confess that we have cause to be thankful and contented. We have walked *warily*, and therefore *slowly*, but at the same time *surely*. Still the result hitherto ought not to make us *presumptuous* or *careless*, but only more intent on further successes both within and without. *I look upon it as a signal favour of Providence, to have it in my power in my mature years to influence a Prince of Your Royal Highness's natural gifts and high position.*[1] That I am thus favoured imposes duties upon me, which at all times I must have wished conscientiously to fulfil. Hence the earnestness of my efforts to labour without ceasing at the cultivation of your mind, at the ennobling of your sentiments; hence the impossibility for me of flattering you, as well as the duty of stimulating you to deal with yourself sternly, and with an iron hand.

'Your early education, my dear Prince,—as well as your youth, has hitherto tended to generate in you a certain tendency, which from this hour forth I am bent on over-

[1] Stockmar was fond of the emphasis of italics. The italics, whenever they occur in the text, are his.

coming. It is the tendency to close the ear of the understanding to the most convincing propositions, whenever you are possessed by impulses and predilections for men and things which spring from mistaken or perverted feeling. This tendency, which on a close self-scrutiny you will find to be the result either of weakness or vanity, should, because of its very origin, be most strenuously subdued. The same defect too often leads Your Royal Highness even in matters of moment to rest satisfied with mere *talk*, where *action* is alone appropriate, and can alone be of any value. It is, therefore, not merely unworthy of you, but extremely mischievous. A judgment so sound as yours should always be able to keep down whatever is false or mistaken in sentiment; and Your Royal Highness's conduct should always be regulated by conviction based upon a clear perception of what is true. Well do I know that the solution of this task can only be the fruit of resolute self-control, and is therefore neither soon nor easily attainable; but I also know just as surely, that it is worthy of you, that it is within the power of your mind to achieve, and that, unless achieved, it is idle to hope for any genuine triumph for you as a man or as a Prince.'

By the time this letter reached the Prince, it had become apparent that the doom of the Melbourne Administration, which had long hung in the balance, was virtually sealed. They had the misfortune to face Parliament with an avowed deficit of nearly two millions. Trade was in a deplorable state—the manufacturing districts overrun with pauperism and distress. There was a general feeling throughout the country that the Ministry, at no time eminent in finance, was not equal to the difficulties both at home and abroad, which now stared them in the face; and this feeling became still more widely spread when they presented a Budget, which

alarmed the agricultural interest by the proposal of a fixed 8*s.* duty on corn, and provoked the hostility of a large section of the commercial world by lowering the duties on foreign sugar and timber, without affording any assurance that the contemplated tariff would produce the desired results. Even before he left England, Stockmar had been told by Lord Melbourne, that 'his Ministry was exposed to all sorts of casualties, and that he saw no guarantee anywhere for its stability' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 359). In such a state of things it was obvious that the catastrophe might arrive at any hour.

The position of affairs was, of course, no secret to the Prince. Lord Melbourne had all along been most anxious 'that the Queen should tell him and show him everything connected with public affairs' (*Early Years*, p. 319); and his Lordship had himself been most unreserved in his communications with him on these subjects. 'I study the politics of the day,' the Prince writes to his Father in April, 1841, 'with great industry. I speak quite openly with the Ministers on all subjects, so as to gain information, . . . and I endeavour quietly to be of as much use to Victoria in her position as I can.' Acting upon this principle, he was desirous to prevent, if possible, upon the arrival of the Ministerial crisis, now so imminent, the recurrence of those difficulties which had frustrated the entrance of Sir Robert Peel to office in 1839. The Queen, he felt, must not again be open to any imputation of being governed by political partisanship in the choice of the Ladies of the Bedchamber. With this view he brought the subject under Lord Melbourne's notice, and reported the result to Baron Stockmar (May 1841) as follows:—

'My communication with Melbourne went off extremely well. I explained to him that I was naturally under some uneasiness at the present state of things; that my chief object was the Queen—my sole anxiety, that nothing uncon-

stitutional should be done, and that the Queen should come out of the crisis this time with more *éclat* than she had done on a previous occasion; that it was my duty and his also, not only to prepare the Queen for the possible eventuality, but also to come with her to an agreement as to what she and I and he would have to do. I showed him the points which I had already communicated to you, and he agreed with me in all of them.'

These points in effect were, that, if a change of Ministry took place, the Queen would arrange that those of her ladies should retire of their own accord, whose removal the Tories considered essential on account of their close relationship to leading Whig Ministers—an arrangement which, while it satisfied every fair requirement of the Tory Cabinet, involved no compromise of the principle for which Her Majesty had contended in 1839, that it was no part of the province of Ministers to say who should or should not be the Ladies of Her Household. It was the Prince's view, and in this Lord Melbourne concurred, that a previous understanding on the subject should be come to with Sir Robert Peel. Negotiations with this view were accordingly opened by the Prince, through the medium of his secretary, Mr. Anson; and the arrangement then come to was satisfactorily carried out, when Sir Robert came into office a few months afterwards, by the retirement of the Duchesses of Bedford and Sutherland, and of Lady Normanby.

The anxiety of the Queen was great at the critical position of the Ministry, to whom from long association and feelings of personal regard she was naturally much attached. At the same time she felt strongly how much more independent was her position now, with the Prince at her side to advise with, than it had been in 1839, when she stood alone. 'Albert,' she writes to King Leopold, 'is indeed a great comfort to me. He takes the greatest possible interest in what goes on,

feeling with me and for me, and yet abstaining as he ought from biassing me either way, though we talk much on the subject, and his judgment is, as you say, good and calm.'

The division (18th May) on that part of the Budget which proposed a reduction of the duties on foreign sugar left the Ministry in a minority of 36. It was generally assumed that this would be followed by their immediate resignation; but the majority of the Cabinet took a different view, and resolved on an appeal to the country. 'Under these circumstances,' as Lord Melbourne told the Queen on the 19th, 'of course I felt I could but go with them; so we shall go on, bring on the Sugar Duties, and then, if things are in a pretty good state, dissolve.'

The same evening, accordingly, Lord John Russell announced to the House of Commons, that on the Monday following he should move the annual Sugar Duties, and on the 4th of June bring forward the question of the Corn Laws. But the Ministers were not allowed to carry out this programme undisturbed; for when the question of the Sugar Duties came on, Sir Robert Peel seconded the Chancellor of the Exchequer's motion, that the existing duties should be continued for a year, and then gave notice that he should on the 31st of May move a vote of no confidence in the Ministry. This was done; and after a four nights' debate, he succeeded in carrying his motion by a majority of one. After this nothing remained but to hurry through the necessary formal business of the Session, and to ascertain with all speed the opinion of the country. On the 23rd of June Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person, and dissolved on the 29th by Royal proclamation, the writs for the New Parliament being made returnable on the 29th of August.

In the course of the debate on the Sugar Duties, the question between the Ministry and their opponents had been made entirely one of Free Trade as against Protective Duties.

Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston supported with the whole weight of their eloquence the principles upon which Mr. Cobden and his friends had long been urging the *total* abolition of the Corn Laws. Their Budget, they contended, had been framed upon the basis of doing away with the system of protective duties, which had excluded our commerce from other countries, sent skill and capital abroad to engage in competition with ourselves, and dried up the sources of our own productive industry. 'I will venture to predict,' said Lord Palmerston, at the close of his very powerful speech, in words which were soon to become memorable, 'that although our opponents may resist those measures to-night for the sake of obtaining a majority in the division, yet if they should come into office these are the measures which a just regard for the finances and commerce of the country will compel them themselves to propose.'

The very decided views thus announced were received with considerable surprise, conflicting as they did with the strong opinions of an opposite character, which had been expressed by Lord Melbourne and others of his Administration at a period comparatively recent. Only so lately as in 1839 Lord Melbourne had in his place in Parliament declared that 'the repeal of the Corn Laws would be the most insane proposition that ever entered the human head.' This circumstance was no doubt strongly present to Stockmar's mind, when he learned from the Prince the issue upon which Lord Melbourne's party had decided to go to the country. He was himself a warm supporter of Free Trade, and believed in its ultimate and not distant triumph.[2] But he believed just as

[2] 'For the world of commerce and industry,' he writes (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 368), 'I expect great things from the time we live in, which is sure to bring very shortly certain principles to maturity. The truth, that all commerce should be free, will come to be generally recognised, and the altered views of their people will make it possible for governments to give reality and substance to such commercial treaties as they shall conclude.'

strongly that the success of great political changes is and always has been due to their being brought forward at the right time, and by the right people; and judging by what he says in the following letter to the Prince, neither of these conditions seemed to him to be satisfied by the attitude now taken up by Lord Melbourne and his party.

At all events, in the fierce political struggle which was now imminent, Stockmar was anxious that the Prince should not be carried away by any of its passions. The nation should see that between the contending parties a position of absolute neutrality was maintained by the Crown; and the Prince's first concern should be to make it more easy for the Queen to reconcile herself to the altered circumstances which were now for the first time to bring her into immediate contact with the leaders of a party, with which she had hitherto been somewhat in antagonism.

'Coburg, 18th May, 1841.

'My dear Prince,—It is scarcely a month since I left England, and yet in that short time many material alterations have taken place in its internal policy. Melbourne's rapid change in his professions on the subject of the Corn Laws, into which he has no doubt been persuaded by his colleagues out of mere good nature and easiness of disposition, has an ugly look. To stimulate hungry wolves, in order to have them as allies on the Government side, is what in his place I would under no circumstances have resorted to. To me, I confess, the business wears upon the whole a very serious aspect, and the crisis seems to me one which will demand genuine statesmanship to get over. What strikes me, however, as its most serious feature is this, that the country may be hurried into decided measures, and that it may be unable to command that clearness, insight, and practical sagacity, which are necessary to pilot the vessel of the state through the storm.

'Although, however, mere intelligence and good will are inadequate to emergencies like the present, and these can only be grappled with by positive knowledge combined with actual experience, and the tact which comes of experience, yet, my dear Prince, you will not fail to see the obligation laid upon you, to turn the events of the hour to account as an instructive practical lesson. For it is your duty and your privilege to give counsel and active support to the Crown, hard pressed as it is, and weakened by so many circumstances and influences at work to its disadvantage.

'In seasons of fermentation like the present Ministerial crisis, out of which a new order of things is likely to arise, *he is most secure, who, looking well ahead, sees his way to what he can make out of the present for the future, and while regulating the present, does this in such a way, that out of it must grow what he has desired for the future, as surely as the plant developes from the germ.* With all my heart, then, will I wish that in my dear Prince this far-seeing faculty may be found in abundant measure.

'All men, still more all women, yield to the omnipotence of events much more readily than to mere verbal demonstration, to advice, or to persuasion. To turn the teaching of facts to true account is consequently of vital moment, for their arguments and theirs alone will be understood when everything else fails.

'If things come to a change of Ministry, then the great axiom, irrefragably one and the same for all Ministries, is this, viz.: The Crown supports frankly, honourably, and with all its might, the Ministry of the time, whatever it be, so long as it commands a majority, and governs with integrity for the welfare and advancement of the country. A king, who as a Constitutional king either cannot or will not carry this maxim into practice, deliberately descends from the lofty pedestal on which the Constitution has placed him to the

lower one of a mere party chief. Be you, therefore, the Constitutional genius of the Queen: do not content yourself with merely whispering this maxim in her ear when circumstances serve, but strive also to carry it out into practice at the right time and by the worthiest means. A man can almost always accomplish what is right, if he set himself resolutely to do so. It is essential, that we all help, according to our means, to build up a solid and well-merited reputation for you. Up to the present time things, it is true, have not been propitious for this; still both in France and Germany much more favourable impressions would have been produced, if external and most unfavourable influences had not exercised so sovereign a predominance in certain quarters.'

While the kingdom was convulsed by the excitement of the political crisis, the Queen and the Prince were able to make short excursions to various parts of the country. Nuneham, Oxford, Woburn Abbey, Panshanger, Brocket Hall, and Hatfield, were successively visited, and everywhere along their route they were met by the warmest demonstrations of loyalty and personal interest. The supplementary escorts improvised by the enthusiasm of her people seem at some places to have occasioned Her Majesty no little discomfort. Thus at Dunstable, although the 11th Hussars (the Prince's own Regiment) supplied the regular escort, 'numbers of farmers,' it is recorded in the Queen's *Journal*, 'rode with us, and they nearly smothered us with dust.' Again, when driving out from Woburn Abbey, 'a crowd of good loyal people,' the same record states, 'rode with us part of the way. They so pressed and pushed, that it was as if we were hunting.' Allusions to these visits will be found in the following extracts from the Prince's correspondence with the Duchess of Kent.

The Duchess had gone at the end of May to revisit her native country for the first time since 1819. On the 7th of June she wrote to the Queen from Amorbach, an estate in Bavaria belonging to the Prince Leiningen, where she had resided after her marriage with the Duke of Kent until her coming to England, just before the birth of the Princess Victoria.

'. . . It is like a dream that I am writing to you from this place. My heart is so full. I am so occupied with you and Albert, and the precious little creature.

'I was quite upset by the kind reception the poor people here gave me. I wish I could give you a description of it. Everywhere I have found proofs of affection and gratitude. The whole little place was in a bustle. . . . I occupy the rooms where your dear Father lived; but Charles [her son, the Prince Leiningen] had one room arranged for me, which is most elegant and pretty. He has made many alterations in the house. Your Father began them just when we left in March 1819.'

To this letter the Prince replies:

'Buckingham Palace, 18th June, 1841.

'Dear Mama,—I owe you many thanks for your long dear letter from Amorbach. . . . I can quite imagine that you have been everywhere very cordially received, and that you will continue to be so. That amidst all that has been going on, and while under such varied emotions, we are constantly in your thoughts, is doubly kind and dear of you. . . .

'Our life here of late has been very unsettled. We paid a very interesting and agreeable three days' visit to the Archbishop of York at Nuneham, and from there I went to Oxford, where I was very well received. The Commemoration was postponed for my presence.

'The impending dissolution is now the engrossing topic

of interest. It empties purses, sets families by the ears, demoralises the lower classes, and perverts many of the upper, whose character wants strength to keep them straight. But this, like other things, comes to an end, and so does not bring the body politic to ruin, as it might otherwise do.

'To-morrow we visit the Duke of Devonshire at Chiswick. On Monday we go to see the "Trafalgar" launched at Woolwich,[3] and on Tuesday prorogue Parliament. Wednesday, Uncle Leopold and Aunt Louise arrive. Thursday, we have a Council for the dissolution of Parliament, and on Friday I lay the foundation-stone of the London Porters' Association. To-day we had a Chapter of the Bath: Sir Charles Napier was decorated. Yesterday was the last drawing-room of the season. All the world is rushing out of town to agitate the country for and against.

'Adieu! ever your affectionate Son,

'ALBERT.'

Ten days later (28th of June) the Prince writes:

'To-morrow the elections begin. The City's will be over at four. All the world are on the tiptoe of expectation as to the result.

'You are by this time in Coburg. How gladly I would be transported thither for a moment I cannot tell you! Your news from Amorbach and Langenburg interested us greatly. How much more eager am I for what you will send me from my dear home!'

The result of the City election was significant of the issue of the elections throughout England. Two of the four seats,

[3] 'This,' the Prince writes to his Father, 22nd June, 1841, 'was the most imposing sight which I can remember. There were about 500,000 people present, and the Thames was covered for miles with ships, steamers, barges and boats.' The wine used had been taken from the 'Victory' after the Battle of Trafalgar. By the Queen's request, the vessel was christened by Lady Bridport, a niece of Lord Nelson's.

which had hitherto been held by the Whigs, were wrested from them by the Conservatives, Mr. Masterman, a Conservative, being at the head, Lord John Russell at the bottom of the poll. On the 15th of July Lord Melbourne reported to the Queen that the Conservatives would have a majority of seventy. 'I knew,' he said, 'at least I thought that it would be so.' Others had calculated the probable majority at not more than fifty.

On the 26th of July the Queen and the Prince visited the Duke of Bedford at Woburn Abbey, from which they went to Panshanger, visiting while there Lord Melbourne at Brocket Hall, and returning to town by way of Hatfield.

'Woburn Abbey is really very beautiful,' the Prince writes to the Duchess of Kent, 'and as complete and comfortable as possible. Yesterday we arrived here; and to-day we make an excursion to Brocket to Lord Melbourne, who is rather nervous about it. We have here, besides the family, Lord and Lady de Grey, Lord and Lady Palmerston, Lord and Lady Ashley, Lord and Lady Leveson Gower, Lord Duncannon, Lord and Lady Verulam, Lord Salisbury, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Vyner, Mr. Henry Greville. With us are, Lady Lyttelton, Miss Cavendish, Lords Headfort, Anson, Colonels Bouverie and Buckley. H—— has already lost his hat from the carriage, sat down upon a basket of strawberries, mistaken ice at dinner for bread, and thrust his fingers into it, &c. &c.

'The country round here is very pretty and very like that near the Rosenau, particularly in the direction of the Fischbacher-Thal. . . .

'Ever your devoted Son,

'ALBERT.'

'Panshanger, July 29, 1841.'

The pleasure of the Queen during this otherwise delightful tour had been somewhat clouded by having to leave behind her at Windsor Castle the Queen of the Belgians, who had been detained in England for some weeks by the illness of her son, the present King, and was to take her departure within a few hours after Her Majesty's return to Windsor. 'To lose four days of her stay,' the Queen writes to King Leopold, 'of which I repeat every hour is precious, is dreadful.' 'The Queen of the Belgians,' says the Queen's *Journal*, 'had been an inmate of the Palace for nearly six weeks, and during this stay, which had been such a happiness for me, we had become most intimate. Louise is perfect, so excellent, so full of every kind and high feeling—*Eine herrliche Seele!* Albert is the only equal to her in unselfishness. She never thinks of herself.'[4]

Such was the vehemence of party excitement at this period, and so widely spread the spirit of discontent, engendered by the prevailing distress and privation throughout the manufacturing districts, that the Queen and the Prince seem to have been deeply impressed by the manifestations of loyalty by which they were everywhere met. 'Nothing,' the Queen writes to King Leopold, 3rd of August, 'could be more enthusiastic or affectionate than our reception *everywhere*, and I am happy to hear that our presence has left a favourable impression. The loyalty in this country is certainly very striking.'

[4] It was thus that Baron Stockmar spoke of this noble woman, on hearing of her death in September, 1850. 'From the moment the Queen entered that circle, in which for so many years I had a place, I have revered her as a pattern of her sex. We say and believe that men can be noble and good; of her we know with certainty that she was so. In her were daily shown a truthfulness of character, a faithful living up to a sense of duty, which inspire conviction of the possible, although only too exceptional, nobleness of the human heart. In characters such as hers, a guarantee is given us of the perfection of the Being who created human nature.'—*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 622.

A letter from the Prince to his Father is couched in the same strain :—

'August 2, 1841.

'We returned the day before yesterday from our excursion into the country, and were indeed exceedingly gratified by all the beautiful things we saw, and by the affectionate and enthusiastic reception we everywhere met with. There is beyond all question a great depth of devotion towards the Throne, the Constitution, and the Church in the English rural population which is most touching to witness.

'Hatfield, a mansion which formerly belonged to Queen Elizabeth, and which has been in Lord Salisbury's family since the time of James I., would be sure to interest you greatly by its architecture and wonderful wood carving.'

On the 19th of August Parliament met, and battle was joined by the contending forces upon Mr. Stuart Wortley's amendment on the Address, in which he proposed, among other things, that the House should 'respectfully represent to Her Majesty the necessity that her Ministers should enjoy the confidence of the country, which the present Administration does not possess.' After a fortnight's debate the House divided about five in the morning of the 28th, when the Ministers found themselves in a minority of 91 in a House of 629 Members.

The same evening Lord Melbourne came to Windsor at Her Majesty's request. 'He praised,' says the Queen's *Journal*, 'the speeches of Lord John Russell and Sir Robert Peel.' Lord Melbourne himself was in very good spirits, saying the only person he was very sorry for was the Queen, and that it was very painful for him to leave her. 'For four years I have seen you every day; but it is so different now to what it would have been in 1839. The Prince,' Lord Melbourne added, 'understands everything so well, and

has a clever able head.' The Queen saw Lord Melbourne next morning before he left the Castle, and was much affected in taking leave of him. 'You will find,' he said, 'a great support in the Prince; he is so able. You said when you were going to be married, that he was perfection, which I thought a little exaggerated then, but really I think now that it is in some degree realised.' 'Nothing,' the same record continues, 'could exceed the Prince's kindness to the Queen at this for her trying time of separation from her old friend. "It is not alone," he said, "the minister you lose, but a faithful and attached friend," adding that he would do everything he could only to be of use to me, but that he feared I should miss Lord Melbourne very much.'

In writing a few days afterwards to King Leopold, Her Majesty says:—

'I cannot say what a comfort and support my beloved Albert is to me—how well and how kindly and properly he behaves. I cannot resist copying for you what Lord Melbourne wrote to me about him, the evening after we parted. He had already praised him greatly to me before he took leave of me. It is as follows:—

'"Lord Melbourne cannot satisfy himself without again stating to Your Majesty in writing what he had the honour of saying to Your Majesty respecting His Royal Highness the Prince. Lord Melbourne has formed the highest opinion of His Royal Highness's judgment, temper, and discretion, and he cannot but feel a great consideration and security in the reflection that he leaves Your Majesty in a situation in which Your Majesty has the inestimable advantage of such advice and assistance. Lord Melbourne feels certain that Your Majesty cannot do better than have recourse to it whenever it is needed, and rely upon it with confidence."

'This naturally gave me great pleasure, and made me very proud, as it comes from a person who is no-

flatterer, and would not have said it, if he did not think so or feel so.'

Sir Robert Peel completed his arrangements for the formation of the new Ministry so quickly that on the 3rd of September, at a Council held at Claremont, the new Cabinet kissed hands upon their appointment. No difficulty of any kind had arisen on either side. Lord Melbourne told Baron Stockmar, who had just returned from Coburg, that Sir Robert Peel had behaved most handsomely, and that the conduct of the Prince had throughout been most moderate and judicious. Peel used afterwards to say that he had felt no slight embarrassment on first coming into official contact with the Prince,[5] for the fact was painfully present to his mind that the serious curtailment of the Prince's income was mainly due to the prominent support which he had given to Colonel Sibthorp's motion the previous year. He was, therefore, not a little touched to find that not a shade of personal soreness could be traced in the Prince's demeanour. On the contrary, his communications were of that frank and cordial character which at once placed the Minister at his ease, and made him feel assured that not only was no grudge entertained, but that he might count thenceforward on being treated as a friend. He quickly formed a very high idea of the Prince's capacity, and, following the system which had been initiated by Lord Melbourne, he continued to keep him thoroughly informed as to the course of public affairs.

How deep was the impression made upon Sir Robert Peel by the Prince, even in those early days of their acquaintance, may be gathered from what he said of him to Mr. Pemberton, afterwards Lord Kingsdown, who was at this time Attorney-General of the Duchy of Cornwall. 'Sir Robert Peel,' says Lord Kingsdown in his unpublished *Recollections of his*

[5] He had been presented to him by Lord Melbourne, at the Trinity House dinner, on the 27th February preceding.

Life at the Bar and in Parliament, p. 130, 'when he introduced me to him in 1841, said that I should find him one of the most extraordinary young men I had ever met with.' So, he adds, it proved. 'His aptitude for business was wonderful; the dullest and most intricate matters did not escape or weary his attention; his judgment was very good; his readiness to listen to any suggestions, though against his own opinions, was constant; and though I saw his temper very often tried, yet in the course of twenty years I never once saw it disturbed, nor witnessed any signs of impatience.' [6]

One of the first acts of Sir Robert Peel after the instalment of his Ministry, was to suggest that the Prince, whose wide range of knowledge in art and science was by this time generally known, should be placed at the head of a Royal Commission to inquire whether advantage might not be taken of the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament to promote and encourage the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom. The inquiry had been carried on for some time by a Committee of the House of Commons; but it had been found from its nature, and the protracted investigations to which it led, to be more properly the subject of a Royal Commission. The cordiality of the relations which had already been established between the Prince and Sir Robert Peel is evident from the following correspondence:—

'October 3, 1841.

'My dear Sir Robert,—When you were last here our conversation turned upon the *Nibelungenlied*, and you seemed to take some interest in this celebrated poem of the prehistoric times of Germany. I thought it would amuse

[6] This extraordinary command of temper was one of the not least remarkable characteristics of the Prince: 'Not a complaint, not a murmur, ever escaped his lips; not a single hasty expression would he ever indulge in, even towards those who were most unjust to him.' So writes General Grey (*Early*

you to see a very fine edition of the work, which has lately appeared, and therefore send it to you to look at. The illustrations are by Bendemann and Hübner, and fine specimens of the school of Dusseldorf. I am sure you will be pleased with the correctness of drawing and composition.

'I was glad to see that your announcement of the intention to form a Royal Commission was so well received in the House of Commons. I have thought much of the proposed plan, and have arrived at the conviction that there had better be no artist by profession on the Committee. The benefit of an artist's opinion would be as well or even better obtained by taking it upon examination, as this would enable the Commission to procure the different opinions of a greater number of artists. I am afraid, moreover, that the discussion upon the various points would not be so free amongst the *laymen* if distinguished professors were present, as these would scarcely venture to maintain an opinion in opposition to those of the latter class.

'I only give you my crude views, and have no wish whatever to press them against the experience of others.'

'Believe me, dear Sir Robert, &c. &c.

'ALBERT.'

To this Sir Robert Peel replied:

'Whitehall, October 4, 1841.

'Sir,—I am very much gratified by Your Royal Highness's kind condescension in allowing me to see the volume which

Years, p. 317), and we have often been told by him that it was impossible to overstate this admirable quality of forbearance and self-control in the Prince. Like Chaucer's Knight—

> He never yet no villanye ne sayde,
> In al his lyf, unto no manor wight;
> He was a verray perfight gentil knight.

' This is the first of the Prince's letters written in English, which we have had occasion to quote. His correspondence and political Memoranda throughout this work, except where otherwise mentioned, as well as those of Baron Stockmar, are translated from the German

accompanied the letter which I had the honour of receiving from Your Royal Highness last night, and was so much interested by the engravings contained in that volume that I will take the liberty of detaining it for a day or two.

'Your Royal Highness has probably heard that M. Cornelius has arrived in London. I had the pleasure of making his personal acquaintance yesterday, as he had expressed a wish to see my pictures.

'Your Royal Highness's suggestions with regard to the constitution of the Commission are entitled to and shall receive the fullest consideration. I am strongly inclined to think that the views of Your Royal Highness with regard to the including of professional men in the Commission are perfectly just.

'It was equally gratifying to me to be the medium of announcing to the House of Commons that Your Royal Highness had been graciously pleased to give the immediate sanction of your name and authority to this Commission, and to witness the cordial satisfaction with which the intimation was received in every quarter of the House.

'I have the honour to be, &c.

'ROBERT PEEL.'

Eight days later, Sir Robert Peel writes to the Prince, with the list of persons proposed for the Commission, adding, 'Your Royal Highness will perceive that the selection is made without the slightest reference to party distinction.' This had, indeed, been made by the Prince a condition of his acting upon the Commission; and in his reply, after stating that the selection appeared to him to be an admirable one, he continues:—'I can only rejoice that party distinctions should have been excluded from this *national* undertaking.'

No better introduction into English public life than the Chairmanship of this Commission could have been desired for

the Prince. The subject of inquiry, besides being peculiarly congenial to his tastes, was one in which he was thoroughly at home. The Commission, constituted wholly without reference to party, included men of the first distinction in politics, art, and literature; and while in the collision of such minds the Prince could not fail to acquire that knowledge of the character of the most influential men in England, and that insight into English ways of thinking and transacting business, which it was all-important for him to obtain, he was able at the same time to let his own high qualities be seen, where they were most sure to be appreciated, and to establish a reputation which, radiating from such a centre, was certain to be heard of throughout society, both widely and soon.

The original Commission included the following remarkable array of names:—Lord Lyndhurst, the Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Aberdeen, Viscount Melbourne, Lord Ashburton, Lord Colborne, the Speaker (now Lord Eversley), the Earl of Lincoln, Lord John Russell, Lord Francis Egerton, Lord Palmerston, Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, Sir Robert Inglis, Mr. Gally Knight, Mr. Benjamin Hawes, Mr. Henry Hallam, Mr. Samuel Rogers, Mr. George Vivian, and Mr. Thomas Vyse. In May 1844 the names of Lord Mahon and Mr. (afterwards Lord) Macaulay were added by a supplementary Commission. 'To me personally,' the Prince writes to Sir Robert Peel (4th April, 1844), in answer to his letter suggesting this addition to the strength of the Commission, 'their addition would be very gratifying, as these sittings (besides the interest of the subject itself) give me an agreeable opportunity, which otherwise I should not have, to get more intimately acquainted with some of the most distinguished men of the day without reference to politics.' To preside over such a body was indeed a distinc-

tion; but it was not less obviously an ordeal, out of which only very high attainments and unusual vigour of mind could hope to come with honour.[8]

The Prince entered with enthusiasm upon the labours of the Commission. One of his first duties was to meet the Secretary, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles Eastlake, to arrange the business of the Commission. The following sketch of this first interview, by the pen of that amiable and most accomplished man, in a letter written at the time (2nd of December, 1841), has fortunately been preserved:—

'After waiting five minutes, the Prince entered alone. . . . He made at once for the window-recess, in which I had been standing, though on his entering I advanced to the middle of the room and bowed. He stood, kneeling with one knee on the chair, while he talked, so that we were at close quarters and in a strong light, which showed his beautiful face to great advantage. . . . There was nothing in his exterior so striking as his face. He is exactly like the engraving from Ross's miniature, but now a little stouter.[9] . . . He soon put me at ease by his pleasing manner. After speaking of Sir Robert Peel and the immediate cause of *my waiting on himself*, we proceeded to discuss the question, which is hereafter to engage our attention more. I listened to his plans, and made objections where I thought it necessary. Two or three times I quite forgot who he was, he talked so naturally and argued so fairly. . . .

'It would be impossible to give all the conversation, and perhaps, as relating to the subjects to be discussed by the Commis-

[8] The Prince told the Queen that he felt he owed to Sir R. Peel his first initiation into public life, for that this Commission was the commencement of his connection with the leading public and literary men of this country. It taught him more, he said, than anything else had done, and he always talked of it with pleasure. One by one, those who had been associated with him dropped off; and only in the spring of 1861 he said to the Queen, 'All my Commissioners are dead almost.' Of all those who sat in that Commission, there are now living only Lord John Russell, Lord Stanhope, and Lord Eversley.—NOTE BY THE QUEEN.

[9] An admirable engraving of this miniature of the Prince at the age of 20, is given in *The Early Years*.

sion, not quite right. I thought, however, that the moment was come when I must make a stand against the introduction of foreign artists; for if His Royal Highness had insisted on this I had made up my mind to resign my secretaryship. I almost said as much by observing that I was irrevocably committed on that point by my letter to the chairman of the late committee. Prince Albert said he knew I was, for he had read that letter. He added, however, that he quite agreed with me. I then said I saw no objection to English artists, who might be entrusted with the management of considerable works, employing Germans under them. To my agreeable surprise Prince Albert would not even admit that this was necessary, for he said he was convinced that in all that related to practical dexterity, which was the department in which it was assumed that some instruction (for fresco) would be necessary, the English were particularly skilful. He observed that in all mere mechanism the English generally surpassed all other nations. He gave several instances and among others said, "Even to the varnish on coaches it is surprising how much more perfect the English practice is than that one sees on the Continent." [10]

'I have given the first words as he meant to say them; but this was the *only* instance in which I could detect a foreign idiom. He said, 'All such mechanical arts and preparations, till coach varnish," &c. *Till* is the English of *jusqu'à*—in Italian *fin' a*—in German *bis zu*; but of course our idiom is *even to—usque ad*. I mention this single slip in nearly an hour's conversation to show how perfectly the Prince speaks English as to idiom, and the accent is scarcely ever perceptibly foreign. His features are

[10] The Prince, it is well known, was particularly observant of the materials used in manufacture, and of their special qualities, and often surprised people by his intimate knowledge of the technicalities of their own craft. We are able, on the authority of Lord Portman, to cite the following striking instance of the accuracy of his knowledge in a matter purely technical. When at Salisbury, in 1857, on the occasion of the Royal Agricultural Society's Show, the Prince visited the Cathedral Chapter House, the restoration of which was then nearly completed. The Prince admired the work, but observed to Lord Portman who attended him, that the paint used was of the wrong kind, 'and that in a short time it would fall off in flakes.' A friend of Lord Portman's, visiting the Chapter House in July, 1870, found the walls in great disorder, a part of the paint falling away precisely as the Prince had foretold.

tranquil in talking. The absence of pride and even of the ceremonious reserve which "hedges" Royalty is very engaging.

'*In alluding to the means by which a school of rising fresco* painters might be encouraged, he said, "There are two great auxiliaries in this country which seldom fail to promote the success of any scheme—fashion, and a high example. Fashion, we know, is all in all in England, and if the Court—I mean the Queen and myself—set the example hereafter by having works of this kind done, the same taste will extend itself to wealthy individuals. The English country seats, which are the most beautiful in the world, would acquire additional effect from the introduction of such a style of decoration, and with such occupation the school would never languish, and would at least have time to develope itself fully."

'This is perhaps a word-for-word specimen of His Royal Highness's accurate and graceful conversation. I could not come up to it; but on one occasion, speaking of the limited character and means of frescoes, I said that it might in some sort be compared to sculpture, which could conceal nothing, and in which necessity of defining involved the necessity of beauty. The Prince paid me the gracious compliment of saying, "You have expressed in a few words what I would have said in many."'

Shortly before the interview thus recorded, the hopes of the Queen and the Prince had been crowned by the birth of the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace on the 9th of November. The recovery of the Queen was rapid, and nothing occurred to mar the happiness this event was calculated to create. On the 21st, the birthday of the Princess Royal, the following entry occurs in Her Majesty's *Journal*:—

'Albert brought in dearest little Pussy' (the Princess Royal) 'in such a smart white merino dress trimmed with blue, which Mama had given her, and a pretty cap, and placed her on my bed, seating himself next to her, and she was very dear and good. And as my precious, invaluable Albert sat there, and our little Love between us, I felt quite moved with happiness and gratitude to God.'

From Windsor Castle, to which the Court removed on the 6th of December, the Queen wrote to King Leopold:—

'We arrived here *sains et saufs* with our awfully large nursery establishment yesterday morning. To-day it is very bright, clear, and dry, and we walked out early, and I felt like prisoners freed from some dungeon. . .

'I wonder very much, whom our little boy will be like. You will understand *how* fervent are my prayers, and I am sure everybody's must be, to see him resemble his Father in *every, every* respect, both in body and mind! Oh, my dearest Uncle, I am sure if you knew how happy, how blessed I feel, and how proud in possessing such a perfect being as my husband, and if you think that you have been instrumental in bringing about this union, it must gladden your heart!'

In another letter a few days afterwards (14th December) Her Majesty recurs to the same theme:—

'We must all have trials and vexations; but if one's *home is happy*, then the rest is comparatively nothing. I assure you, dear Uncle, that no one feels this more than I do. I had this autumn one of the severest trials I could have, in parting with my government, and particularly from our kind and valued friend, and I feel even now this last very much: but my happiness at home, the love of my husband, his kindness, his advice, his support, and his company make up for all, and make me forget it.'

When Christmas came round with its pleasant festivities and its shining Christmas-trees, it had within it a new source of delight for the Royal parents. 'To think,' says the Queen's *Journal*, 'that we have two children now, and one who enjoys the sight already, is like a dream!' And in writing to his Father the Prince expresses the same feeling. 'This,' he says, 'is the dear Christmas Eve, on which I have so often listened with impatience for your step, which was to usher us into the present-room. To-day I have two children

of my own to give presents to, who, they know not why, are full of happy wonder at the German Christmas-tree and its radiant candles.'

The coming year was danced into in good old English fashion.[11] In the middle of the dance, as the clock finished striking twelve, a flourish of trumpets was blown, in accordance with a German custom. This, the Queen's *Journal* records, 'had a fine solemn effect, and quite affected dear Albert, who turned pale, and had tears in his eyes, and pressed my hand very warmly. It touched me too, for I felt that he must think of his dear native country, which he has left for me.'

[11] The custom is German also.

CHAPTER VIII.

The conflicting claims of relatives, at once numerous and in high position, made the choice of Sponsors for the Prince of Wales a matter of considerable anxiety to the Queen and the Prince. The knot of the difficulty was cut by their resolving to invite the King of Prussia to undertake the office. He was not connected by the ties of blood; but his position as Sovereign of the most important Protestant kingdom on the Continent justified the selection, and secured for it the general approval of the country.

King Frederick William, who, it was known, had been for some time anxious again to visit England, did not hesitate long in accepting the invitation. 'Politicians, as their habit is,' says Baron Stockmar (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 377), 'attached an exaggerated political importance to the affair. The King, who foresaw this, wrote to Metternich, and in a manner asked for his advice. The answer was evasive; and on this the King determined not to give himself any concern about the political intrigues which were set on foot against the journey. Certain it is, that the Russians, Austrians, and even the French, in the person of Bresson (their ambassador at Berlin) manœuvred against it. They were backed up by a Court party, who were persuaded that the King would avail himself of the opportunity to promote, along with Bunsen and the Archbishop of Canterbury, his pet idea of Anglicanizing the Prussian Church. When the King's decision to go became known, Bresson begged that he would at least go

through France, and give the Royal Family a meeting; but this was declined.'

On the 22nd of January the King arrived at Greenwich, where he was met by Prince Albert. On reaching Windsor Castle, he was received at the door of Entrance by the Queen with all the formalities of state. 'The King,' says Her Majesty's *Journal* of the day, 'is not taller than Albert, and very fat. His features are small, but he has a pleasing countenance, not much hair, and very little whisker. He was in common morning costume, and complained much of appearing so before me.' His kindly and attractive manners are spoken of in warm terms. 'He is entertaining, agreeable, and witty, tells a thing so pleasantly, and is full of amusing anecdotes.'[1]

Royal baptisms had hitherto been, as a rule, celebrated within the Palace. But it was felt to be more in harmony with the religious sentiment of the country that its future King should be christened within a consecrated building. St. George's Chapel, Windsor, was selected for the purpose; and there, under circumstances of peculiar state and splendour, the rite was performed at 10 A.M. on the 25th of January, the baby Prince behaving, according to the *Times*' reporter, 'with truly princely decorum.' Besides the King of Prussia, the other Sponsors were the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg represented by the Duchess of Kent, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha represented by the Duchess of Cambridge, the Princess Sophia represented by the Princess Augusta of Cambridge, and Prince Ferdinand

[1] On these qualities a pleasant commentary is afforded by a letter of the Baroness Bunsen's (*Bunsen's Life*, ii. 7), describing a ball at Windsor Castle on February 28. 'As soon as the King, with Prince Albert, came, the ball began, the Queen making the King dance in a quadrille with herself, which he did with suitable grace and dignity, though he had long given up dancing, and though his figure is not good . . . . My impression of the Queen's deportment is, that it is perfect in grace and dignity: she conversed eagerly with the King, laughing heartily (no *company* laugh), at things he said to entertain her.'

of Saxe-Coburg. 'It is impossible,' says the Queen's *Journal*, 'to describe how beautiful and imposing the effect of the whole scene was in the fine old Chapel, with the banners, the music, and the light shining on the altar.'[2]

The King, who profited by every opportunity of seeing all that was most worthy to be seen during the fortnight of his stay, was present at a scene of almost equal splendour and interest the day before he left England, in the opening of Parliament by the Queen in person. A contemporary letter of the Baroness Bunsen, quoted in her husband's *Memoirs* (vol. ii. p. 9), furnishes a graphic sketch of a ceremony, the interest of which, always great, was heightened both by the presence of a guest so distinguished, and by the circumstances under which the new Parliament met:—

'On Thursday, February 3, was the opening of Parliament—the great scene from which I had expected most, and was not disappointed. The throngs in the streets, in the windows, on every spot where foot could stand—all looking so pleased—the splendid Horse Guards, the Grenadier Guards—of whom it might be said, as the King did on another occasion, "An appearance so fine you know not how to believe it true,"—the Yeomen of the Body Guard; then, in the House of Lords, the Peers in their robes, the beautifully dressed ladies, with many, many beautiful faces; last, the procession of the Queen's entry, and herself, looking worthy and fit to be the converging point of so many rays of grandeur . . . . The composure with which she filled the throne, while awaiting the Commons, was a test of character—no fidget and no apathy. Then her voice and enunciation could not be more perfect. In short, it could not be said that *she did well*, but she *was* the Queen; she was, and felt herself to be, the

[2] There was a full choral service at the Christening. A special anthem had been composed by Mr. (now Sir) George Elvey for the occasion. On the Prince being told of this, and asked when it should be sung, he answered, 'Not at all. No anthem. If the service ends by an anthem, we shall all go out criticising the music. We will have something we all know—something in which we can all join—something devotional. The Hallelujah Chorus; we shall all join in that, with our hearts.' The Hallelujah Chorus ended the ceremony accordingly.

acknowledged chief among grand national realities. Placed in a narrow space behind Her Majesty's mace-bearers, and peeping over their shoulders, I was enabled to hide and subdue the emotion I felt, in consciousness of the mighty pages in the world's history condensed in the words, so impressively uttered in the silver tones of that feminine voice—Peace and War, the fate of millions, relations of countries, exertions of power felt to the extremities of the globe, alterations of corn laws, the birth of a future Sovereign, mentioned in solemn thankfulness to Him in whose hands are nations and rulers! With what should one respond, but with the heart-felt aspiration, "God bless and guide her! for her sake, and the sake of all!"'

The next day the King left England. His warm and imaginative nature had been deeply moved by the incidents of his brief stay. He was much affected at going, and left behind him in the hearts of his hosts a feeling of the greatest affection and respect for his thoroughly amiable disposition and great attainments. The feeling was reciprocal, and was expressed by his Minister, Count Anton Stolberg, who had accompanied him on his visit, in writing to Baron Stockmar some weeks afterwards (6th March). 'The King, my master,' he says, 'thinks with pleasure of that never-to-be-forgotten time.' In it was laid the foundation of a friendship with the Queen and the Prince, which was cemented by the confidential correspondence of future years.

In the midst of the excitement of this Royal visit the tidings reached the Prince of the approaching marriage of his brother to the Princess Alexandrine of Baden. The marriage was to take place at Carlsruhe on the 3rd of May, and the Prince was urgently pressed to be present. Had he consulted his own wishes, there could have been but one answer; but other considerations prevailed. 'There is no actual impediment,' he writes to his stepmother, 'but there are divers political and moral considerations, which give the preponderance to reason over inclination, and there-

fore I must banish it from my mind.' The Queen, in common with the Prince, looked forward to this marriage with the utmost pleasure. 'My heart,' Her Majesty writes to King Leopold, in terms that are touching as well from their simple force as from the happiness of heart out of which they spring, 'my heart is full, very full of this marriage; it brings back so many recollections of our dear *Verlobung*,—as Ernest was with us all the time, and longed so for similar happiness.' And again, in another letter, on the 8th of February, 'I have entreated Ernest to pass his honeymoon with us, and I beg you to urge him to do it; for he witnessed *our* first happiness, and *we must therefore witness his*.'

The state of affairs at home and abroad at this time were such, that it is easy to understand why the Prince should have felt himself bound not to leave Her Majesty's side even for a few days. Public questions of the most vital moment were pressing hourly on her consideration. Scarcity of work, low wages, food at high prices, and consequent wide-spread suffering in the manufacturing districts, had brought about a state of things which caused the Government the deepest anxiety. Though their privations were borne by the people with admirable patience, it was impossible to say at what point this might give way; while the paralysis, which seemed to have fallen upon trade and manufactures, made it hard to divine from what quarter an efficient remedy for the distress might be looked for. In the course of this year, serious insurrections, which required to be put down by military force, broke out in the iron and coal districts of Staffordshire and South Wales, in the Potteries, in Manchester and elsewhere in Lancashire, while matters assumed an aspect no less serious among the stalwart and more highly paid workers in the coal and iron mines of Lanark and Renfrew. The military force in the United Kingdom, small at best, and reduced to half its strength by the numbers required for the maintenance of peace

in Ireland, was taxed to the uttermost. At any hour, the incendiary promptings of Chartist agitators, who had established a thorough system of organization in many districts of the country, might have led to a general rising, with which the military might have found it hard to cope; and yet, such was the state of affairs abroad, that they could not be reinforced by the withdrawal of troops from our colonial and other possessions.

In China, again, we were involved in a serious war. In the West Indies and at the Cape the presence of a strong military force was indispensable. In Affghanistan, the greatest disaster which ever befel the British arms was impending. The presence of our fleet in the Tagus alone prevented a Portuguese insurrection. Spain was distracted by a ruthless civil war; and even then France had taken up a position with respect to the future marriage of the Spanish Queen which it was impossible for England to acknowledge, and which still further endangered our friendly relations with that country, already rudely shaken by what had taken place with regard to the Eastern Question. America, always sensitive, had recently been in a state of unusual exasperation against England on account of the right claimed by British cruisers of searching American vessels to ascertain whether they were British, carrying on the Slave Trade under the American flag; and a question as to the Maine frontier, of a no less perilous character, was now being urgently pressed on for settlement. In these circumstances, incessant demands were made on the Government for an increase of our forces, both military and naval; demands which had to be met in the face of a falling revenue, with a deficit for the year of 2,500,000*l.*, swollen to nearly 5,000,000*l.* by the expenses of the Affghanistan expedition.

Such was the posture of public affairs on the opening of Parliament; and it is to mistake the position and functions

of a British monarch, to suppose that the anxieties of the Minister who was called to grapple with these difficulties, and to find a remedy for the sufferings of her people, were not fully shared by the Queen and by the Prince. They therefore went heartily along with Sir Robert Peel in the bold measure of finance by which he met, and, as the event proved, averted the danger of a threatened national bankruptcy, into which the country had for some time been drifting, by his proposal of an Income Tax, not exceeding 7*d.* in the pound, on all incomes above 150*l.*

The measure was an extreme one. It had never previously been resorted to except under the pressure of a war expenditure; and from its inquisitorial nature, as well as the inequality with which it bears upon individuals, it was of necessity unpopular. But the case was one that demanded an exceptional remedy; and the country responded with admirable spirit to the appeal to its patriotism which Sir Robert Peel made in introducing his measure to the House of Commons on the 11th of March. The Queen had authorised him to announce that it was her wish not to be exempted from the operation of the tax; and the announcement was not without its effect in reconciling her subjects to an impost which that generation had never known. 'In this case,' said Lord John Russell, in his speech against the measure, 'it is indispensable that there should be no exemptions, not even of the highest and most exalted in the realm, of a due sense of which the Sovereign has afforded a shining example, *in voluntarily offering* to share the burden with the meanest of her subjects.'

The sacrifice made by the nation in accepting the measure was amply requited by the rapid restoration of public credit, the Funds rising at once from 89 to 93. Confidence in the national resources was restored, when the tax was found to produce two millions more than had been anticipated by its

author. The splendid harvest of 1842, after a series of five disastrous years, contributed towards the same result; and although it took some time to revive the drooping energies of trade, and to turn the tide of suffering and want, which had borne so long and heavily upon the poorer classes, still, from this point may be traced the beginning of that current of industrial development and material prosperity which has since flowed almost uninterruptedly and with ever increasing volume.

It is now well known, that while Sir Robert Peel was urging his measure on the House of Commons with a buoyancy of spirit and a noble confidence in the character and resources of the country and its people, which commanded the admiration of all, his heart was heavy with the tidings which had reached him only the day before, and of which the country then knew nothing, of the massacre of Sir William MeNaghten, and the virtual annihilation of the British forces at Cabul. On the 10th he had communicated the news to the Queen. 'It was the first calamity,' the Duke of Wellington at the same time told Her Majesty, 'that had befallen us since 1780. He feared the troops were too much separated. It was a terrible country to defend.' It was not till the 5th of April, that the full extent of the disaster was known to the Government in all its ghastly details; but the same despatches contained the satisfactory assurance, that no further losses had been sustained. How deeply this calamity was felt by the Queen and the Prince, how fully they shared the dauntless spirit with which it was confronted by the nation, need not be told, any more than the interest with which they watched the masterly operations that rapidly restored to the British name in India all the *prestige* which it had lost, and established its power upon a basis even firmer than before.

Every effort was made by the Court to give a stimulus to trade in London by the festivities which are supposed to have

this effect. Dinners, concerts, balls followed fast upon each other. On the 26th of May, the Queen and the Prince went in state to a Ball given at Covent Garden Theatre for the relief of the Spitalfields weavers. With the same object, a magnificent *Bal Costumé* had been given at Buckingham Palace a fortnight before. This, the Prince, in writing (7th May) to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, says, 'we have organized with the view of helping trade in London, which is greatly depressed. We are to represent Edward III. and Queen Philippa, and the whole Court is to appear in the Court dress of that period. The Duchess of Cambridge is to head a procession of 120 persons, intended to represent France, Italy, and Spain.'

It is curiously illustrative of the soreness of feeling towards England, which was prevalent in France at the time, as well as of the readiness of people, who ought to know better, to believe the most absurd fictions, if they happen to concur with their prejudices, that letters were actually received from the King of the Belgians, stating that great excitement had been created at the Court of Paris by the report, that in this procession 'King John of France was to be represented as a prisoner and in chains!'[3]

[3] It was probably some rumour of this which suggested to Mr. Monckton Milnes and Mr. Charles Buller the idea of an admirable *Jeu d'Esprit*, which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* the day before the Ball, in the shape of a Debate in the French Chamber of Deputies, said to be reported 'by express.' It began with an interpellation of M. Berryer to the effect—'Whether the French Ambassador in England had been invited to the *Bal Masqué* which is to be given by the haughty descendant of the Plantagenets, for the purpose of awakening the long-buried griefs of France in the disasters of Cressy and Poitiers and the loss of Calais.' M. Berryer was represented as following up his question by a passionate appeal, in which he urged that, 'it was on the banks of the Rhine that the cannon of France ought to accompany the dancers of St. James's.' Lamartine and De Tocqueville followed in much the same strain, and M. Guizot concluded the debate by a grave asseveration that Lord Aberdeen had given the most satisfactory assurances,—that the Queen of England desired to educate her people by a series of Archæological entertainments; but that in deference to the susceptibilities of France, M. de St. Aulaire would represent at the Ball the Virgin of Domremy—he would go as 'Joan of

While these proofs were still recent of Her Majesty's sympathy with the distress of that class of the community, who, in the language of the Prince, 'has most of the toil, and least of the enjoyments of the world,' public feeling was revolted by another attempt upon her life, close to the spot where Oxford had made a similar attempt in 1840. The day after the occurrence, the Prince wrote to his Father with all the details:—

'I hasten to give you a true report of the dreadful occurrence of yesterday, that you may be possessed of the actual facts; and I beg you to communicate the contents of this letter to all our relations, and to send copies of it to dear Grandmama and those who are at a distance, as I have no time to-day to write more.

'On Sunday the 29th as we were returning from the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, at two o'clock, as we drove along the Mall, there was as usual a crowd of spectators under the trees on our left, who bowed and cheered. When we were nearly opposite Stafford House, I saw a man step out from the crowd and present a pistol full at me. He was some two paces from us. I heard the trigger snap, but it must have missed fire. I turned to Victoria, who was seated on my right, and asked her, "Did you hear that?" She had been bowing to the people on the right, and had observed nothing. I said, "I may be mistaken, but I am sure I saw some one take aim at us." When we reached the Palace I asked the footmen who had been at the back of the carriage if they had not noticed a man step forward and stretch his hand towards the carriage, as if he wanted to throw a petition

&c.' This last stroke, it might be thought, would have led dulness itself to suspect a joke. But no. The subject was gravely discussed at the Clubs, and even Sir J. Graham rushed into Sir Robert Peel's rooms in Whitehall Gardens, with the paper in his hand, exclaiming, 'There is the devil to pay in France about this foolish ball!' See Lord Houghton's *Monographs*, Lond. 1873, p. 250.

into it. They had noticed nothing. We were immediately impressed with the importance of keeping what had occurred a profound secret. I did not breathe a syllable about it to any one except Colonel Arbuthnot, to whom I told what had happened, and directed him to make it known forthwith to the Inspector of Police, to Sir Robert Peel, and Sir James Graham.

'I then ran out upon the balcony to see whether the man had not been seized, which would have led to a commotion and to hundreds crowding round him. But all was quiet; and the people dispersed, satisfied with having seen the Queen. . . . In the afternoon Sir Robert Peel came with the Head of the Police and took down my statements in writing, together with a description of the man's appearance. I began almost to distrust myself and what I had seen, as no one else had noticed anything, and we were driving rapidly at the time. . . .

'Yesterday morning (30th), at 9 A.M., a boy of 14 (named Pearse), who stutters greatly, came to Mr. Murray and said he had seen a man present a pistol at us, as we were returning from church, but not fire, exclaiming afterwards, "Fool that I was, not to fire!" Besides himself (Pearse) the thing had been seen by an elderly gentleman, who had turned round to him, and said, "This is something too strange." He followed the gentleman, fancying he would go and report the matter to the police, and thinking he might be wanted as a witness; but the gentleman walked on up St. James's Street. Here he turned round, having observed that the boy continued to follow him, repeated his former exclamation, asked the boy's name, age, address, &c., and wrote them down. Pearse, thinking this was with a view to citing him as a witness, considered the affair was in good hands, and went home. But as he heard no more of the gentleman, he came to the Palace. There was now no longer

any doubt, so we sent the boy to the Home Office, where his evidence was taken down. The Police showed the greatest activity. We were naturally much agitated, Victoria very nervous and unwell. As the doctor wished that she should go out, we determined to do so, for we should have had to *shut* ourselves up for months, had we settled not to go out, so long as the miscreant was at large.[4] Besides, as he could have no suspicion he was watched, and although so careless the first time, had yet made such a lucky escape, we felt sure he would again come skulking about the Palace, and that the numerous policemen in plain clothes, who were on the look-out for him, would seize him on the least imprudence or carelessness on his part. We drove out at 4, gave orders to drive faster than usual, and for the two equerries, Colonel Wylde and Colonel Arbuthnot, to ride close to the carriage. You may imagine that our minds were not very easy. We looked behind every tree, and I cast my eyes round in search of the rascal's face. We, however, got safely through the Parks, and drove towards Hampstead. The weather was superb, and hosts of people on foot. On our way home, as we were approaching the Palace, between the Green Park and the Garden Wall, a shot was fired at us about five paces off. It was the fellow with the same pistol—a little swarthy, ill-looking rascal. The shot must have passed under the carriage, for he lowered his hand.[5] We felt as if a load had

[4] In Mr. Anson's Memoranda of May 30, and June 1, he says, 'Went in the evening to the Palace, and saw the Queen and the Prince. Her Majesty seemed none the worse. She told me she had fully expected it, and it was a relief to her to have it over. She had for some time been under the impression that one of these mad attempts would be made. . . . Her Majesty said she never could have existed under the uncertainty of a concealed attack. She would much rather run the immediate risk at any time, than have the presentiment of danger constantly hovering over her. She had been much gratified by the kind feeling people had shown. It was perhaps not so boisterous as on the occasion of Oxford's attempt, but the feeling now was of a deeper cast.'

[5] Count Mensdorff told the Queen, 'That one is sure not to have been hit when one hears the report, as one never hears it when one is hit.' Writing to

been taken off our hearts, and we thanked the Almighty for having preserved us a second time from so great a danger.

'John Francis (that is the man's name) was standing near a policeman, who immediately seized him, but could not prevent the shot. It was at the same spot where Oxford had fired at us two years ago, with this difference only, that Oxford was standing on our left with his back to the Garden Wall. Uncle Mensdorff and Mama were driving close behind us. The Duchess Bernhard of Weimar was on horseback not sixty paces from us. The culprit was instantly taken off to the police office. The populace are in a state of extreme indignation. He is not out of his mind, but a thorough scamp. His answers are coarse and witty. He tries to make fun of his judges. Little Pearse identified him this morning as the same person he had seen on Sunday. He is twenty-two years old, and a joiner; the son of a machinist at one of the theatres; a wretched creature. I hope his trial will be conducted with the greatest strictness. . . .

'Your devoted Son,

'ALBERT.'

'Buckingham Palace, May 31, 1842.'

Francis was tried on the 17th of June, and found guilty of high treason. After the sentence of death was pronounced on him, the wretched vanity which, more than any murderous intent, had prompted his dastardly outrage, could no longer maintain the semblance of indifference which he had hitherto affected, and he fell swooning into a turnkey's arms, and was carried insensible from the court.

King Leopold the day after the occurrence, the Queen says: 'I was really not at all frightened, and feel very proud at dear Uncle Mensdorff calling me *sehr müthig*, which I shall ever remember with peculiar pride, coming from so distinguished an officer as he is. Thank God, my angel is also well; but he says that had the man fired on Sunday, he must have been hit in the head. God is merciful; that indeed we must feel daily more and more! . . . . The feeling of horror is very great in the public, and great affection is shown us.'

There was great doubt whether his pistol had been loaded. The Queen herself was most anxious that the sentence of death should not be carried into effect, although fully conscious of the encouragement to similar attempts which might follow from such leniency. The Royal prerogative of mercy is not, however, exercised, except under the direction of the Government; and they, after lengthened deliberation and consultation with the Judges, determined to commute the sentence into transportation for life.

The very day after this resolution became known, the Prince had occasion to communicate to his Father the particulars of a fresh outrage of the same kind:—

'Buckingham Palace, July 4, 1842.

'I have again to tell you of an attempt on Victoria's life. As we drove to the Chapel of St. James's Palace yesterday, a hunchbacked wretch tried to shoot at the carriage in which Victoria, myself, and Uncle Leopold were sitting. The pistol missed fire, and a boy of sixteen (called Dassett) tore the weapon out of his hand and collared him, calling at the same time to the crowd to secure the assassin. Everybody laughed, and the people cried, "Give him back his pistol; it is only a joke." Little Dassett and his brother, however, dragged the fellow to some policemen, who only laughed and pushed him away as making fun of them. The crowd pressed upon poor Dassett in such a way that he had to let the hunchback go. Not satisfied, however, Dassett, followed by the mob, went up to a policeman and showed him the pistol. The policeman seized him, thinking he was the culprit, and wanted to get off by shamming that he had taken the pistol from somebody else. By this time others came up who had seen the attempt, including the boy's uncle who had been present, and there was no longer any doubt of the fact. The pistol was examined by the police inspector, and was found to contain powder, paper tightly

rammed down, and some pieces of a clay pipe. Last night, about 10 o'clock, the hunchback (whose name is Bean) was arrested. His father is a worker in gold, and he is himself a chemist's assistant. He left his father a week ago, and wrote to him he would "never see him again, as he intended doing something which was not dishonest but desperate, and begged to be remembered to his aunt, and also to his brothers, although they had never treated him like a brother." He signed himself, "Your unhappy, but disobedient son."

'I can quite imagine that the circumstance of this attempt being made the day after Francis received his pardon will excite much surprise in Germany. But this letter was written six days before Francis's pardon. As the law now stands, his execution, notwithstanding the verdict of the jury, would have been nothing less than a judicial murder, as it is essential that the act should be committed with intent to kill or wound, and in Francis's case this, to all appearance, was not the fact, at least it was open to grave doubt. The vindictive feeling of the common people would be a thousand times more dangerous than the madness of individuals. . . .

'Your devoted Son,

'ALBERT.'

The Queen did not know of Bean's attempt until after she had returned to the Palace. On being told of it, she betrayed no alarm, but said she had expected a repetition of the attempts on her life, so long as the law remained unaltered by which they could be dealt with only as acts of high treason. Sir Robert Peel hurried up from Cambridge on hearing what had occurred, to consult with the Prince as to the steps to be taken. During their interview Her Majesty entered the room, when the Minister, in public so cold and self-commanding, in reality so full of genuine feeling, out of

his very manliness was unable to control his emotion, and burst into tears.

No time was lost in carrying through Parliament such a measure as was thought likely to put a stop to these attempts for the future. A Bill was introduced on the 12th of June making them punishable as high misdemeanours by transportation for seven years, or imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a term not exceeding three years,—the culprit 'to be publicly or privately whipped, as often, and in such manner and form, as the Court shall direct, not exceeding thrice.' This Bill became law on the 12th of July, and under it Bean was tried on the 25th of August, and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment.

Early in July the Prince's brother, who, with his bride, had arrived on a visit, accompanied the Queen and the Prince on the 14th to Claremont, where they were in the habit of seeking such short intervals of quiet and refreshment as they could snatch from the fatigue and excitement of their London life.[6] While there, a letter from Sir Robert Peel on the 14th, announcing the death of the Duke of Orleans, who had been run away with by his horses, and killed in jumping from his carriage at Neuilly the previous day, filled them with dismay. They both knew the Duke, who was intimately connected by ties of marriage with the Coburg Family, and admired him; and their deepest sympathies were awakened for the Orleans family, knowing as they did how their hopes, no less than their affections, had been centred upon him. The full extent of the disaster, in a political point of view, was at once apparent; but the thought of this was merged in that

[6] 'This place,' the Queen writes from Claremont to her uncle (10th January, 1843), 'has a particular charm for us both, and to me it brings back recollections of the happiest days of my otherwise dull childhood, when I experienced such kindness from you, dearest uncle, kindness which has ever since continued. . . . Victoria plays with my old bricks, &c., and I see her running and jumping in the flower garden, as *old*, tho' I fear still *little*, Victoria of former days used to do.'

of the sufferings of a family in whom they felt the warmest personal interest.

'Your kind and melancholy letter of the 16th,' the Queen writes, in answer to King Leopold, who had gone at once to Paris with the Queen of the Belgians, 'was a great comfort to us, though it only renewed our grief. I can easily imagine your horror and astonishment. My poor dearest Louise, how my heart bleeds for her! I know how she loved poor Chartres—and deservedly,—for he was so noble and good! All our anxiety now is to hear how dear frail Helène (the Duchess of Orleans) has borne this too dreadful loss. She loved him so, and he was so devoted to her! . . . . We can hardly think of anything but this terrible misfortune, and of all of you.' The Duke, as the Queen well knew, was the favourite brother of the Queen of the Belgians, and her grief, the King had written, when she knew that it was him she had lost, 'was astounding.' It was not only that a beloved brother had been suddenly struck down in the fulness of his strength, but with him, she felt, the star of the family had set. 'Poor Louise,' the King adds, 'that one so good and amiable should have so much to bear!'

A few days later the Queen of the Belgians herself wrote, describing her parents as heart-broken—'both grown old in looks, and their hair turned quite white.' 'Chartres,' she adds, 'was more than a brother to us all, he was the head, and the heart and soul of the whole family—we all looked up to him. I little expected to outlive him, as I have done my beloved Marie; but once more, God's will be done!' A dim forecast of the terrible reverse, which, a few years afterwards, altered the destiny of the whole family, seems to have passed across the mind of our own Queen, when, in one of her letters to her uncle at the time, she exclaims, 'Perhaps poor Chartres is saved great sorrow and grief. *Him* we must *not* pity.'

A visit to Belgium in the autumn, and a meeting there with some of the French Royal Family, had been projected by the Queen and Prince. This, of course, was now impossible, and in its stead a plan was formed for a short tour in Scotland, after Parliament should have broken up. It was prorogued on the 11th of August by the Queen in person. Disturbances of so alarming a character had for some time prevailed in the manufacturing districts that, in dismissing her faithful Lords and Commons to their counties, Her Majesty's Speech had expressed her confidence that 'they would do their utmost to encourage, by example and exertion, that spirit of order and submission to the law, without which there could be no enjoyment of the fruits of peaceful industry, and no advance in the course of social improvement.' The very next day the aspect of affairs in Manchester and elsewhere had become so serious that a Cabinet Council was held to decide what measures should be taken to meet the emergency. Disorderly mobs traversed the country, forcing their way into mills and manufactories, destroying their machinery, and compelling, by threats and intimidation, those who were willing to work to cease working, and join in their riotous demonstrations. A Proclamation against such proceedings was issued on the 14th, and the whole troops that could be spared from London, including a regiment of the Guards, were despatched to Manchester by railway on two hours' notice. There, and also in Burslem, and Preston, lives were lost and many wounded in the collisions between the military and the rioters. The railway communications were threatened. Stockport, Macclesfield, Bolton, and Dudley, were kept in terror by bands of excited operatives. 'The evil spirit,' Sir Robert Peel wrote to the Queen, 'has spread into the West Riding of Yorkshire; Huddersfield has been attacked by the mob, and other towns are threatened.' The agitation for increase of wages, in which the movement began, had been

taken advantage of by the Chartists for their own purposes. Themselves few in number, their organization was made available to secure combined action. In this there was great danger. But the Government was able to strike at its root by arresting several of their most active leaders; and after some days of the gravest anxiety Sir Robert Peel was able to assure the Queen, that tranquillity had been restored.

The same violent spirit had shown itself in the west of Scotland, and continued to do so for many months afterwards. But if there had been any doubt whether it was without political significance, and not merely an attempt to force up wages to a level which the state of trade did not justify, it would have been removed by the outburst of loyal enthusiasm with which the Queen and the Prince were received in Scotland. The heart of the nation was stirred to its depths, and those who were accustomed to think of its people as cold and undemonstrative must have seen with some surprise the passionate ardour with which their devotion to their young Queen was expressed. The Prince, while in Edinburgh, tried to snatch a few hours from the pressure of public ceremonies to visit its literary and scientific Institutions. The people there, Mr. Anson records, 'like those in London, look upon him as the great patron of all arts and sciences, and consequently expect a certain attention from him to their pursuits.' The ornithological collection in the University Museum attracted his particular attention; and he surprised the Professor, in whose charge it was, by his extensive knowledge of the subject it was meant to illustrate. With Edinburgh itself he was charmed. He speaks of it in writing to his Father as 'unique in its kind, very curious and interesting.'

The general impression produced on the Royal visitors by what they then saw of Scotland and its people, is shortly summed up in the following passage of one of the Prince's

letters to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha (18th September), immediately after his return to Windsor Castle:—

'Scotland has made a most favourable impression upon us both. The country is full of beauty, of a severe and grand character; perfect for sport of all kinds, and the air remarkably pure and light in comparison with what we have here. The people are more natural, and marked by that honesty and sympathy which always distinguish the inhabitants of mountainous countries, who live far away from towns. There is, moreover, no country where historical traditions are preserved with such fidelity, or to the same extent. Every spot is connected with some interesting historical fact, and with most of these Sir Walter Scott's accurate descriptions have made us familiar. The finest points we visited were Perth, Loch Leven, Scone, Dunkeld, Taymouth, Killin, Loch Tay, Loch Earn, Glen Ogle, Drummond Castle, Stirling, Linlithgow.'

The visit to Scotland had been attended with the happiest results. While cementing the attachment of a large section of the people to the Sovereign, it had shown the truly insignificant proportions of the party, who, under the name of Chartism, were clamouring for revolutionary change. The bracing air of its mountains had not been more invigorating to the health of the Queen and the Prince than the devotion of its people had been refreshing to their spirits, agitated and exhausted as these had been by the anxieties of the preceding months. It seemed also to be the opening of a brighter epoch. Already (September 1842) Ghuznee and Cabul were once more in our hands; Akbar Khan had been defeated, and his captives set at liberty; while a peace had been concluded in China on terms most advantageous to our commercial interests.

The tidings of these great events reached the Queen and

the Prince on the 23rd of November at Walmer Castle, which had been placed at their disposal by the Duke of Wellington. The same messenger brought despatches from the India House with letters from Lord Ellenborough, announcing the complete reconquest of Affghanistan, and from Lord Aberdeen with the news of the Peace which had been concluded with China, on terms which included indemnification for the expenses of the war, a favourable tariff, and an open trade with five of the principal Chinese ports. No such important intelligence had been received in England for many years. It relieved the country from the pressure of an overwhelming anxiety, as well as of a formidable war expenditure, while it opened a field for commercial enterprise which could hardly fail to give the stimulus to trade and manufacture which was needed to restore comfort and tranquillity to our suffering population.

The first thought of the Queen and the Prince was, how to reward the courage, enterprise, and skill of those by whom these splendid results had been achieved. It was their wish that both a Chinese and Affghanistan medal should be at once struck, and distributed. In this the Cabinet concurred. But it subsequently appeared that Lord Ellenborough, in violation of the understood rule, that such rewards emanate only from the Sovereign, had, upon his own responsibility, issued medals to the Indian Army; and it was therefore only possible to carry out the other part of the plan. The following letter from Baron Stockmar, who had returned to Coburg in October, is in answer to one from the Prince, written under the first excitement of the tidings from the East:—

'7th December, 1842.

'I have this moment had the pleasure of receiving Your Royal Highness's communication of the 28th of November. Right from my heart do I wish the Queen and yourself joy of the political successes. . . Specially delighted am

I with the passage, which tells me that you have it in view to secure the merited reward to those whose toil and valour have brought about such results. Bravo! *That is equity; it betokens sound judgment and right feeling, it must win for you recognition and gratitude, and, what is of even more importance, that attachment* which is the most precious possession of persons of high position, and the one really solid basis, on which, amid the storms which threaten all in power, they can rest with security. This is at the same time my real reward for my loving and loyal superintending care for you and for your Queen, as by your acts it gives me the conviction, *that I have not merely shown you the right way, but that you are actually walking in it.* Continue to do so, and the esteem and attachment of all who know and are connected with you will be for you the shield and bulwark on which you may rest with assurance in all the struggles of life.'

Since the change of Ministry, the Prince had devoted himself more closely than before to the politics of the day. In this he was encouraged both by Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, who were soon convinced, as Lord Melbourne had been, that Her Majesty had in him an adviser whose capacity and strong practical judgment could not fail to be of infinite value in assisting her decisions. Before Baron Stockmar left England, he had the satisfaction of being told by Lord Aberdeen, how greatly both Ministers were gratified to perceive that the Queen leant upon the Prince's judgment, and showed an obvious desire that he should share her duties. It gave the Prince, Lord Aberdeen added, the moral status and influence to which he was entitled; and they had also remarked with pleasure in their dealings with him, how gently he exercised his authority, never giving a decided opinion on any point without previously consulting the Queen. They

thought it most desirable that the Prince should occupy this position, and, as it was with the full concurrence of the Queen, it could be open to no possible objection.

It was perhaps both natural and politic that some hesitation should have been felt, as it certainly was felt by the previous Government, while the Prince was yet comparatively a stranger, in recognising so fully his right to stand in this relation to the Sovereign and her Ministers. But now that the true qualities of his mind and character were known, any jealousy on this subject would have been as unjust, as it would of necessity have been ineffectual. And that they were known and appreciated by those best qualified to judge, is apparent from the fact, that even at this early period the appointment of the Prince to the office of Commander-in-Chief, in the event of the demise of the Duke of Wellington, had been privately contemplated by the Ministry, and was even discussed at the same interview between Lord Aberdeen and Baron Stockmar. From him, however, it received no encouragement. On the contrary, he at once expressed his decided disapproval of the project, and on nearly the same grounds which led the Prince to decline the office, when its acceptance was pressed upon him by the Duke himself in 1850.

Nor was the nation generally more backward in appreciating the Prince's obvious anxiety to identify himself with their interests. They had indeed been careful to show no distrust towards him on the narrow ground that he was not of their own race, which would certainly not have been the case had he been other than he was. Of this the Prince himself appears to have been fully conscious. In a memorandum of a conversation with him on the 25th November of this year, Mr. Anson records:

'The Prince, reading in *Hallam's History* the other day, encountered the following passage, which he copied out and sent

me. Speaking of William III., Hallam says: "The demeanour of William, always cold, and sometimes harsh, *his foreign origin* (a sort *of crime in English eyes*), &c., conspired to keep alive this disaffection." In talking this over with the Prince, I admitted it was quite true that a very laudable and natural jealousy and dislike prevailed in the minds of Englishmen against foreigners, though perhaps they would not be willing to allow it; but with regard to *him* personally I did not think this feeling was at all prevalent. The Prince replied that he did not think Englishmen in general would pretend to any concealment of this national prejudice; but he must say with regard to himself, that he did not feel he was regarded in this spirit. On the contrary, every effort had been used to show him the kindest feeling, and to prove to him that, as the Queen's husband, he was looked upon as a thoroughbred Englishman.'

The conduct of the Prince since his arrival in England had been subject to the severest scrutiny. But he 'had borne his faculties so meekly,' he had been 'so clear in his great office,' that neither malice nor idle gossip had been able to detract from the favourable impression which all his public appearances had created. 'It was remarked to me to-day,' says Mr. Anson in another memorandum of this period, 'as is frequently done, by a keen observer of character, and by no means a good-natured one, that it was most remarkable the Prince should have been now nearly two years in his most difficult position, and had never given cause for one word to be said against him in any respect.' This result was not to be gained without an amount of circumspection that demanded the sacrifice of much of that freedom of action and intercourse in which a man of his wide range of sympathies would naturally have delighted. At the same time it reacted upon himself in producing a certain reserve of manner, which was apt to be mistaken for coldness and hauteur by those who had not more intimate opportunities of judging of his genuine modesty and kindliness of nature.

'From the moment of his establishment in the English palace as the husband of the Queen,' General Grey has well said (*Early Years*, p. 353), 'his first object was to maintain, and, if possible, even raise the character of the Court. With this view he knew that it was not enough that his own conduct should be in truth free from reproach; no shadow of a shade of suspicion should, by possibility, attach to it. He knew that, in his position, every action would be scanned—not always possibly in a friendly spirit; that his goings out and his comings in would be watched, and that in every society, however little disposed to be censorious, there would always be found some, prone, were an opening afforded, to exaggerate, and even to invent stories against him, and to put an uncharitable construction on the most innocent acts.

'He, therefore, from the first, laid down strict, not to say severe rules, for his own guidance. He imposed a degree of restraint and self-denial upon his own movements, which could not but have been irksome, had he not been sustained by a sense of the advantage which the Throne would derive from it. He denied himself the pleasure—which, to one so fond as he was of personally watching and inspecting every improvement that was in progress, would have been very great—of walking at will about the town. Wherever he went, whether in a carriage or on horseback, he was accompanied by his equerry. He paid no visits in general society. His visits were to the studio of the artist, to museums of art or science, to institutions for good and benevolent purposes. Wherever a visit from him, or his presence, could tend to advance the real good of the people, there his horses might be seen waiting; never at the door of mere fashion. Scandal itself could take no liberty with his name. He loved to ride through all the districts of London where building and improvements were in progress, more especially when they were such as would conduce to the health or recreation of the working classes; and few, if any, knew so well, or took such interest as he did, in all that was being done, at any distance east, west, north, or south of the great city—from Victoria Park to Battersea—from the Regent's Park to the Crystal Palace, and far beyond. "He would frequently return," the Queen says, "to luncheon at a great pace, and would always come through the Queen's dressing-room, where she generally was at that time, with that bright loving smile with which he ever greeted her;

telling where he had been—what new buildings he had seen—what studios, &c. he had visited. Riding for mere riding's sake he disliked, and said: "*Es ennuyirt mich so.* (It bores me so.)"'

Already the claims upon the Prince's attention were so numerous and varied, that his strength was taxed to the uttermost. It was even difficult for him to obtain those hasty rides to which the Queen alludes, and in one of her letters to Baron Stockmar in December of this year, Her Majesty expresses much anxiety, that measures should be taken 'to prevent his being besieged when in London by so many unnecessary people. His health is so invaluable, not only to me (to whom he is more than all in all), but to this whole country, that we must do our duty, and manage that he is not so overwhelmed with people.' His fatigues had recently been greatly augmented, by having to undertake the superintendence of the Royal Establishment and of many details connected with the office of Privy Purse, which up to September of this year had been in the hands of Baroness Lehzen. The organization of the Household was thoroughly defective, and the consequent confusion, discomfort, and extravagance were a source of incessant annoyance and distraction. The demands thus imposed upon the Prince's time and energies were the more intolerable, coming as they did at a period when he felt called upon to give redoubled attention to public affairs. This was his first and most pressing duty, but its discharge was manifestly impossible, without such a thorough reform as would establish order and regularity in the conduct of the complicated arrangements of the Royal Household, and thereby set free his mind for 'nobler thoughts and nobler cares.'

In this dilemma his thoughts naturally turned to Baron Stockmar, who had a year before gone with him fully into the question, and with his wonted thoroughness and foresight,

had drawn up a Memorandum or scheme of reform 'to unite the greater security and comfort of the Sovereign, with greater regularity and better discipline of the Royal Establishment.'[7] Already the Queen and the Prince had found the immense advantage of his practical skill and tact in placing upon a thoroughly sound footing that part of their establishment which had to deal with the care and training of the Royal children. Now that a wider, if not more delicate problem had to be solved, they felt that no one was more qualified to grapple with its difficulties, or more likely to work out judiciously the necessary reforms. To him, therefore, the Prince wrote as follows:

'My dear Stockmar,— . . . I cannot let the old year close without praising the foresight which during its course has arranged so much for my advantage, and without again seeing in the results a sacred duty, zealously to use the position I have been placed in for the good of all around me, and to lay out like a treasure at interest the experience I have gained. Let me once more thank you for much loyal concern for the welfare of us all, for much trouble and fatherly counsel in many moments of difficulty. When I look back I see nothing which I could wish otherwise; but when I look forward, I feel that much remains to be done to bring matters to a satisfactory point. . . .

'We have reached a critical transition-period, in which every day the germs of a noble bias may be planted. Still I feel the necessity for the wise counsel and support of a man of experience. When you left us, you said to me, "When you really want me, write, and I will come." I am well aware of what you are to your family, and your own concerns, and I have therefore been unwilling till now to importune

[7] Passages from this document have been quoted in Baron Stockmar's *Memoirs*, where its date is incorrectly assigned to the end of 1844. Its actual date is 9th January, 1841.

you to return so soon. But now the moment is come, when I think I may venture to remind you of your promise; therefore do not delay. My attention hitherto has been directed to a host of trifles. It always seems to me as if an infinitude of small trivialities hung about me like an ever present weight; I mean by these the domestic and Court arrangements, and to these I have chiefly applied myself, feeling that we never shall be in a position to occupy ourselves with higher and graver things, so long as we have to do with these mere nothings. . . .

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, December 27, 1842.'

CHAPTER IX.

To one who only knows the Royal Household of a more recent day, so complete in its details, so smooth in its working, so thoroughly under control,—a vast machine moving with an almost ideal precision and regularity,—it is not easy to picture the state of things to which the Prince refers in the letter just quoted, and with which the Queen and himself had to contend for many years. It is indeed surprising, that it could have gone on at all, without the whole internal economy of the Palace falling into intolerable confusion, for the arrangements there were absolutely without control and subject to no definite system. This was due to the circumstance that ostensibly they were under the control of too many masters, each acting independently, and without concert. The three great officers of State, the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Horse, all of them officials who varied with every change of the Ministry, and were appointed without regard to any special qualifications for their office, had each a governing voice in the regulation of the Household. Their rules of administration were as various as their individual capacity. No uniformity of system prevailed; there was no general understanding to secure the harmonious working of their various departments, no responsible resident officer to represent them and to see that discipline was maintained, and the comfort of the Sovereign secured.

While things continued in this state, order, comfort, and economy were manifestly impossible. Thus, one section of the Palace was supposed to be under the Lord Chamberlain's

charge, another under that of the Lord Steward, while, as to a third, it was uncertain whose business it was to look after it. These officials were responsible for all that concerned the interior of the building, but the outside had to be looked after by the Office of Woods and Forests. The consequence was, that 'as the inside cleaning of the windows belonged to the Lord Chamberlain's department, the degree of light to be admitted into the Palace depended proportionably on the well-timed and good understanding between the Lord Chamberlain's office and that of Woods and Forests.' One portion of the *personnel* of the establishment, again, was under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, another under that of the Master of the Horse, and a third was within the jurisdiction of the Lord Steward. 'The Lord Steward,' writes Baron Stockmar in the Memorandum already referred to (p. 154), 'finds the fuel and lays the fire, and the Lord Chamberlain lights it. . . . In the same manner the Lord Chamberlain provides all the lamps, and the Lord Steward must clean, trim, and light them.' Before a pane of glass or a cupboard-door could be mended, the sanction of so many officials had to be obtained that often months elapsed before the repairs were made. 'As neither the Lord Chamberlain, nor the Master of the Horse, have a regular deputy residing in the Palace, more than two-thirds of all the male and female servants are left without a master in the house. They can come on and go off duty as they choose, they can remain absent hours and hours on their days of waiting, or they may commit any excess or irregularity; there is nobody to observe, to correct, or to reprimand them. The various details of internal arrangement, whereon depend the well-being and comfort of the whole establishment, no one is cognisant of or responsible for. There is no officer responsible for the cleanliness, order, and security of the rooms and offices throughout the Palace.'

The public heard with astonishment a few days after the birth of the Princess Royal in November 1840, that a boy had been discovered, at one o'clock in the morning, under a sofa in an apartment adjoining Her Majesty's bedroom. How, it was said, could such an occurrence, which might have endangered the Queen's life, be possible, if proper regulations existed for the protection of the royal person? But to those who were aware of what Baron Stockmar calls 'the absence of system, which leaves the Queen's Palace without any responsible authority,' the incident admitted of only too easy explanation.

A state of things such as we have indicated could not long have been endured by any private person. But the remedy, so easy in ordinary circumstances, was by no means simple, where so many interests were bound up with the existing system, and so many persons were affected by the necessary reforms. Sir Robert Peel, when consulted by the Prince in the end of 1841, deprecated any change, which should seem to impair the authority of the great officers of the State, or make them subordinate to any new control, and thereby render their offices 'less an object of ambition than they at present are to very distinguished Members of the House of Peers.' In this the Prince entirely concurred. 'I also agree,' he adds in his reply (2nd November, 1841), 'that ancient institutions and prescriptive usages in the Court ought never to be touched by the Queen, but with the maturest reflection and caution. But, notwithstanding all these admissions, I remain as anxious as ever, that something should be done to introduce into the present system (or rather confusion) improvements so peremptorily necessary; and I am convinced that these improvements may be made without apprehending a hindrance from the above admissions. All I beg of you now, my dear Sir Robert, is your cordial and persevering assistance in combating the

existing and crying nuisances. Much as I am inclined to treat the Household machine with a sort of reverence from its antiquity, I still remain convinced that it is clumsy in its original construction, and works so ill, that as long as its wheels are not mended there can neither be order nor regularity, comfort, security, nor outward dignity in the Queen's Palace.'

Baron Stockmar, in his Memorandum of January 1841, had anticipated and given full effect to the considerations urged by Sir Robert Peel. He knew England and its ways too well not to be sensible of the danger of any innovations either upon the dignity of offices so highly prized, or upon usages, however inconvenient or extravagant, which had the sanction of time at their back. He therefore recommended that the necessary reforms should emanate from the officers of State themselves, and be carried into effect by the Master of the Household, to whom they should delegate the necessary authority, and who, as he resided permanently in the Palace, could see the Sovereign's wishes carried out, and her comfort secured, and be at the same time responsible to themselves for the maintenance of order, discipline, and security within the Royal establishment. So many persons had to be consulted, however, and the motives to keep things as they were were so numerous, that this measure, judicious as it was in its conception, and efficient in practice as it was ultimately found to be, took some years to commend itself thoroughly to those by whom alone it could be carried out.

Meanwhile, various partial attempts at internal reform were made; but these, as might have been expected, proved unsatisfactory and ineffectual, and only gave rise to complaints of undue interference, and gossiping misrepresentation out of doors of the objects by which these reforms were prompted. So late as November 1844, Sir Robert Peel writes: 'Reforms in the Royal Household are not very pala-

table to either of the great political parties of the State. The *personnel* of the Household is necessarily a very mixed body. It does not consist exclusively of the *protégés* of a Whig or Tory Administration. The *esprit de corps*, the fear of reduction, the hope of profiting by lavish expenditure, unite all, whatever be their party attachments, by a sense of common interest. Many of the subordinate *employés* have friends and patrons of different politics; and their patrons, like themselves, are apt to make common cause against reform, and to devise various means of making it unpopular, by misrepresenting the motives of it, and provoking a clamour against it, in which the idle, the disappointed, the malicious, are quite ready to join. There are very few enlisted on the other side, for the subject is little understood, and practical, well considered reform in details excites but little active sympathy in its favour.'

While fully appreciating these considerations, the Prince was not deterred by them from persevering in his resolution to effect a complete revolution of the existing system. Daily experience proved it to be incompatible with the comfort, no less than with the dignity of the Court. On this ground alone he would have felt bound to submit to any amount of odium which he might provoke in effecting the necessary reforms. But he had also in view the further consideration, which from the first had been present to his mind, that the Royal Establishment, as it was first in dignity, should also be first in purity, in efficiency, and not least in well-regulated economy. Waste, the canker of all, but especially of all great establishments, should be made as difficult as possible, at the same time that nothing was spared which was essential for the befitting splendour of a great Monarchy. He continued, therefore, to press the subject from time to time on the attention of Sir Robert Peel and the officers of State, and drew up at the close of 1844 a comprehensive scheme of reform,

based upon Baron Stockmar's earlier Memorandum. This brought matters to a point, and effect was soon afterwards given to the Prince's views by the heads of the several departments conferring upon the Master of the Household absolute authority over the whole internal economy of the Palace. All that was hoped from the change was more than realised, and the Prince had from this time the satisfaction of being permanently relieved from a multitude of those petty and distressing cares, which, in his own words, had hitherto 'hung about him like an ever-present weight.'

For the first time the Queen was unable to open Parliament in person, when it met on the 2nd of February, 1843. Situated as Her Majesty then was, it was thought prudent not to expose her to any excitement or fatigue, and she was compelled to forego the satisfaction of announcing in person the successful issue of the campaigns in India and China, as well as the settlement of our differences with America, which had been effected some months before by the Ashburton Treaty. These formed a happy set-off to the long-prevalent and still-continuing depression of the manufacturing industry of the country, to which allusion had also to be made in the Royal Speech, and which at once became the subject of a fierce party-struggle, upon Lord Howick's motion for a Committee of the whole House to consider it.

'Parliament is opened,' the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar (8th February), 'and the party-men are already pouring broadsides into each other.' The debate, which ended triumphantly for the Ministry, was made memorable by an unlucky phrase in Mr. Cobden's speech, to the effect that he held Sir Robert Peel personally responsible for the present lamentable and dangerous state of affairs. Sir Robert, replying upon the moment under great excitement, interpreted this language as an incentive to attacks upon his life, and although this interpretation was of course earnestly disclaimed

by Mr. Cobden, it was felt that an event, the horror of which was still fresh in everybody's mind, sufficiently explained, if it did not justify, the sensitiveness shown by the Premier to language of such ambiguous import. About three weeks previously (20th January), his secretary, Mr. Drummond, had been shot, while entering the Premier's official residence, by a man of the name of McNaughten, and had sunk under the wound. It was known that the assassin had mistaken him for the Premier, and that the act was prompted by political animosity. 'Poor Drummond,' the Queen writes (31st January) to King Leopold, 'is universally regretted. Indeed, I seldom remember so strong an interest (beginning with ourselves) being taken in, and so much feeling so generally shown towards a private individual. People can hardly think of anything else. I trust,' adds Her Majesty, whose painful experience of a few months previous had forced upon her the consideration of what is and what is not irresponsible criminality, 'it will have the beneficial effect of making people feel the difference between complete madness, which deprives a man of *all* sense, and madness which does *not* prevent a man from knowing right from wrong.'[1]

Writing a few days afterwards, the Queen adds, 'Poor Lady Peel has been very ill from this last terrible event, and on wonder.' In these circumstances it was only natural that Sir Robert should have carried the sympathy of the House of

[1] The popular instinct, which in these cases is generally right, was shocked by the verdict returned by the jury (3rd March), 'Not guilty, on the ground of insanity.' If acts like McNaughton's, long and deliberately planned, and executed with a definite purpose, were to be dealt with as freaks of monomania, it was felt that a licence would be given to crime which might lead to most disastrous results. The general question as to what was to be deemed the measure of irresponsible mania was submitted to the whole Judges, who on the 19th July, 1843, in answer to the question, 'If a person under an insane delusion as to existing facts commits an offence in consequence thereof, is he thereby excused?' returned an unanimous opinion that he was equally liable with a person of sane mind. This declaration has had effect even upon monomani ac

Commons with him in his denunciation of language, which it is quite certain Mr. Colden would never have used, if the construction of which it was susceptible had been present to his mind.

All that the Queen and Prince had seen of Sir Robert Peel since his accession to office had tended to inspire them with confidence and respect. In the letter just quoted Her Majesty speaks of him as 'undoubtedly a great statesman, a man who thinks but little of party, and never of himself.' These, of all others, were the characteristics most likely to excite the admiration of the Prince, with his strong convictions, that in the strife of parties for supremacy the welfare of the State was occasionally forgotten. How well he understood Sir Robert Peel's position, and foresaw the collision with his own followers which was likely at no distant date to ensue from the change which his opinions had undergone upon the question of the Free Trade, is apparent from the following Memorandum of Mr. Anson's of 30th April, 1843:—

'The Prince said yesterday, that Sir Robert Peel was certainly far from popular with the Conservative party. . . . He for his part had the greater confidence in Sir Robert for the very cause to which he attributed the want of confidence with which his party regarded him. It was that Sir Robert was determined to adopt his own line, and not be turned aside by the fear of making political enemies, or losing support. He was determined either to stand or fall by his own opinion, and the Prince felt that in such a man's hands the interests of the Crown were most secure.'[2]

[2] It is interesting to compare this early estimate of Sir Robert Peel with the Prince's final judgment of him, as given in his speech at York on October 25, 1850:—'The constitution of Sir Robert Peel's mind was peculiarly that of a statesman, and of an English statesman: he was Liberal from feeling, but Conservative upon principle. While his impulses drove him to foster progress, his sagacious mind and great experience showed him how easily the whole machinery of a state and of society is deranged, and how important, but how difficult also, it is to direct its further development in accordance with its fundamental principles, like organic growth in nature. It was peculiar to

It was April before Baron Stockmar was able to comply with the Prince's urgent entreaties for his return to aid him with his counsels. A few months, he found, had wrought a great change. 'The Queen,' he wrote, 'is well, the Princess' (who for about a year had caused great anxiety by an apparent delicacy of health), 'wonderfully improved, round as a little barrel, and the Prince of Wales, though a little plagued with his teeth, strong upon his legs, with a calm, clear, bright expression of face. The Prince himself is well and happy, though he frequently looks pale, worried, and weary. He is rapidly showing what is in him. He is full of a practical talent, which enables him at a glance to seize the essential points of a question, like the vulture that pounces on his prey, and hurries off with it to his nest' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 392). Remembering that Stockmar's only misgiving as to the Prince had been, that he might fail in this very quality, no wonder that, as his biographer tells us, his heart was gladdened by what he observed on this visit.

A letter of the Prince to the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg about this time may be cited as a slight illustration of his clear practical judgment, which would not be blinded by the illusions of sentiment, where a substantial interest was at stake:—

'Windsor Castle, February 16, 1843.

'There is certainly a great charm, as well as deep interest in watching the development of feelings and faculties in a little child, and nothing is more instructive for the knowledge of our own nature, than to observe in a little creature the

him, that in great things, as in small, all the difficulties and objections occurred to him; first, he would anxiously consider them, pause, and warn against rash resolutions; but having convinced himself, after a long and careful investigation, that a step was not only right to be taken, but of the practical mode also of safely taking it, it became a necessity and a duty to him to take it: all his caution and apparent timidity changed into courage and power of action, and at the same time readiness cheerfully to make any personal sacrifice which its execution might demand.'

stages of development, which, when we were ourselves passing through them, seemed scarcely to have an existence for us. I feel this daily in watching our young offspring, whose characters are quite different, and who both show many loveable qualities.

'I wish you more success than generally attends the education of poor children of the lower ranks by persons of our own; and I cannot but warn you against a mistake often committed under similar circumstances, *i.e.* forgetting that education is the preparation for the future life, and that, if it be not consistent with the pupil's *prospects*, he may have to pay for the pleasure, which his education gives you, with the happiness of his whole life, as nothing is more certain to ensure an unhappy future than disappointed expectations.'

The same reason which prevented the Queen from opening Parliament in person, made it impossible for Her Majesty to hold the usual Spring Levees. The Prince, therefore, undertook to hold them for her; and, as the Presentations to him were to be considered as equivalent to Presentations to the Queen herself, Her Majesty was thus saved the exposure and fatigue, which she must otherwise have undergone later in the season, of a number of Levees and Drawing-rooms crowded one upon another in rapid succession. It is difficult now to understand, that this step should have provoked the animadversion of a certain Court party as an unwarrantable assumption of Royal functions; and that they should have had the bad taste to follow up their complaints by conspicuously absenting themselves from the Levees. The Prince's hold on public confidence, however, was too firm to be affected by matters of this description; and the Queen's conviction that the Prince and herself must be one, and that on such occasions she could only be represented by him, was based upon a feeling with which her subjects instinctively sympathised.

On the 25th of April another Princess was added to the Royal Family. The Queen made a rapid recovery. 'Albert,' she writes to her uncle, 'has been, as usual, all kindness and goodness. . . . Our little baby is to be called Alice, an Old English name, and the other names are to be Maud (another Old English name, and the same as Matilda), and Mary, as she was born on Aunt Gloucester's birthday. The Sponsors are to be the King of Hanover, Ernestus Primus (now the Duke of Coburg), poor Princess Sophia Matilda, and Feodore, and the christening to be on the 2nd of June.' The King of Hanover arrived too late to be present at the ceremony. Nevertheless, as the Queen reports to her uncle (6th June), it 'went off very brilliantly. Nothing could be more *anständig*, and little Alice behaved extremely well.'

The first public result of the labours of the Royal Commission on the Fine Arts was an Exhibition in the summer of this year in Westminster Hall, of Cartoons, for which prizes had been offered, on subjects illustrative of English History and Poetry. The Exhibition opened on the 1st of July, and the Prince watched its effect upon the great crowds who thronged the Hall while it lasted with the closest interest. What he then observed filled him with hope for the development of a taste for art among the people, which might become an important agent in elevating their character and habits, while it gave a higher aim to such of our manufactures as were connected with the arts of design. The interest shown in this exhibition by the labouring classes was indeed remarkable; and, as noted by Sir Charles Eastlake at the time, it afforded 'the strongest proof of the love of the lower orders for pictures, when they exhibit an event:'—

'I abridged,' he adds, writing on the 22nd July, 'the Catalogue to a penny size for the million, but many of the most wretchedly dressed people prefer the sixpenny one with the quotations, and it is a very gratifying sight to witness the attention and earnest-

ness with which they follow the subjects with the books in their hands. . . . All the workmen of the Houses of Parliament go in, but chiefly in the evening, because, being as white as millers (the masons) they have themselves the discretion to time their visit. You will see by the Catalogue that the references and quotations are often good of their kind, being indeed from the highest sources. I stated to the Commission yesterday, that these Catalogues in the hands of so many thousands would be the first introduction of many to an acquaintance with our best poets and writers, and the importance of the Exhibition as a means of humanizing the people was daily felt.'

Himself a great admirer of fresco painting, the Prince threw himself with great zeal into the question of its applicability for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, and the researches into the best methods of applying it, which occupied much of the attention of the Commission. The opinions of its members were not a little divided as to the subjects to be dealt with. Some considered that mere decoration by arabesques and otherwise was alone necessary; others condemned any attempt at a moral aim. The Prince took an opposite view, holding that the purposes of decoration might be combined with a patriotic and moral aim, and that, although many would give but a passing glance to the works, the painter was not therefore to forget that others might view them with more thoughtful eyes. This was the view which ultimately prevailed, and there can be no doubt it was the sound one. For the incidents embodied in the frescoes, which now decorate the walls of both Houses of Parliament, although the frescoes themselves have failed for the most part most pitiably in the durability that was hoped for, excite the liveliest curiosity in the crowds which may be constantly seen around them.

To stimulate the interest in fresco painting the Prince determined to have it applied in the decoration of a summer-house or pavilion in the garden of Buckingham Palace.

E. Landseer, Maclise, Uwins, Eastlake, Leslie, Sir William Ross, Dyce, and Stanfield received commissions, and vied with each other in producing a series of eight lunettes in illustration of Milton's 'Comus.'[3] The Queen and Prince watched their progress almost from day to day; and the following extract from a letter by Mr. Uwins (15th August, 1843) is valuable, as showing the impression produced by their visits upon one of not the least gifted of the artists, in whose labours they testified so warm an interest:—

'The opportunity so lately afforded me of becoming acquainted with the habits, tastes, and in some degree with the intellectual acquirements of the Prince and the Queen has greatly increased my respect for them.

'History, literature, science and art seem to have lent their stores to form the mind of the Prince. He is really an accomplished man, and withal possesses so much good sense and consideration, that, taken apart from his playfulness and good humour, he might pass for an aged and experienced person, instead of a youth of two or three and twenty.

'The Queen, too, is full of intelligence, her observations very acute, and her judgment apparently matured beyond her age.

'It has happened to me in life to see something of many Royal personages, and I must say, with the single exception of the Duke of Kent, I have never met with any, either in England or on the Continent of Europe, who have impressed me so favourably as our reigning Sovereign, and her young and interesting husband.

'Coming to us twice a day unannounced and without attendants, entirely stript of all state and ceremony, courting conversation, and desiring rather reason than obedience, they have gained our admiration and love.

'In many things they are an example to the age. They have breakfasted, heard morning prayers with the household in the private Chapel, and are out some distance from the Palace talking to us in the summer-house, before half-past nine o'clock

[3] These, with the other decorations of the Pavilion, were reproduced in a volume published in 1846, under the superintendence of Professor Gruner, with an Introductory Notice by Mrs. Jameson.

—sometimes earlier. After the public duties of the day, and before their dinner, they come out again, evidently delighted to get away from the bustle of the world to enjoy each other's society in the solitude of the garden.

'Our peaceful pursuits are in accordance with the scene; and the opportunity of watching our proceedings seems to give a zest to the enjoyment of these moments snatched from state, parade, and ceremony. Here, too, the royal children are brought out by their nurses, and the whole arrangement seems like real domestic pleasure.'

These hurried moments given to the study of art were seized by the Prince with a zest which only those can feel whose hours are filled with the cares and responsibilities of a crowded and anxious life. Such, indeed, is the life of all sympathetic and thoughtful public men; but it was his in a peculiar degree, for his attention was always on the alert to learn what was best to be done for the improvement of the social condition of the English people, and to help towards it by his personal efforts wherever he could. Among many illustrations of this, which we find in the records of this year, may be mentioned what he did towards the abolition of duelling.

Public attention had been painfully called to the subject by a duel on the first of July, in which Colonel Fawcett was shot by his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Monro. The survivor, it was known, had endured intolerable provocation. He had gone out most reluctantly, and only because not to have done so must, according to the then prevailing code, have fatally compromised his honour. As it was, he who had been the party really aggrieved was branded as a felon, and his career as an officer was ruined by the unhappy issue of an encounter, which every officer in the service would in the same circumstance have felt he could not avoid. Similar disasters had excited comparatively little notice; but here the intimate relations of the parties made the issue appear so much more

shocking, that people felt the time was come to decide whether a system should continue, by which a man, having first been insulted, must also expose himself to be shot, or be branded in one event as a coward, or in another as a criminal.

The Prince felt that the first step towards the extinction of the practice generally would be to put a stop to duels in the army. With this view he sought an interview with the Duke of Wellington. The Duke, he found, had himself given attention to the subject, but had come to the conclusion that nothing could be done, having no belief in the efficiency of any remedy except that of public opinion. This did not satisfy the Prince. The current of public opinion had no doubt set in the right direction, but much mischief might be done before it became so strong as to sweep away a practice so deeply rooted. He therefore suggested the establishment of Courts of Honour, bound to secrecy, to whose arbitrament officers should submit their differences. To give weight to the tribunal the Prince also proposed that the Duke should place himself at its head, offering at the same time his own personal co-operation, if this were thought advisable. 'The Duke was afraid,' the Prince writes in his Memorandum of this interview (25th July), 'that there was a great jealousy against any secret tribunal; however, he would give it his best consideration. I reminded him of the Tribunal des Maréchaux in France, and suggested that he should make inquiry about the Courts of Honour which had been, and still were, attended with the best results in the Bavarian Army. This he agreed to do, as a basis for whatever further steps might have to be taken.'

The Prince's suggestion was deliberately canvassed by the heads of both Services. The Lords of the Admiralty objected to it on the ground that, owing to the peculiar nature of the naval service, a system of Courts of Honour could not be carried out in practice, although they admitted that it might

be of use where the officers were resident in England. Duelling, moreover, was of rare occurrence in the Navy, and there was therefore less necessity for the adoption of any new tribunal. The Master of the Ordnance, Sir George Murray, objected altogether to the plan. Quarrels, he contended, would not be made up or differences reconciled upon the arbitration of others—and the law, in his opinion, was already sufficiently strong, if properly enforced, to repress the practice. But the healing of quarrels was not the object in view; and the law was powerless, as had again and again been shown, to protect the innocent.

'There certainly is the power of punishment,' says the Prince in a letter to the Duke of Wellington (13th January, 1844), 'but it seems almost unjust to resort to it, so long as no other protection is given to the honour of officers.

'Honour, abstractedly taken, is invulnerable. It is a treasure that nobody can take from us, and which we cannot even injure ourselves. No act of a third person can deprive us of it. But there is an honour which is entirely based upon the opinion of the world, and therefore dependent upon others. The person whose honour (in this sense of the word) has been injured, must have a remedy by which he can recover the treasure taken from him, and re-establish himself in the consideration of the world. In olden times the appeal to the sword was the acknowledged remedy. With the progress of civilisation and the Christian religion this unchristian and barbarous custom has been generally condemned, forbidden by law, and severely punished; but no substitute has been granted, and the officer, whose very existence is based upon his honour, is left to the alternative of either trespassing against the laws of religion and of the State, and becoming a criminal, or of losing caste in the estimation of his profession and of the world, and seeing that honour tarnished, which is his pride. It is, therefore, from a sense of justice

that it becomes necessary to consider what other remedy should be granted, if the only one at present acknowledged is to be prosecuted with all severity.'

The Prince goes on to say, that this remedy seemed to him to be most easily found in a Court or Courts of Honour. Admitting, however, the difficulty of such an organisation of these Courts as would include both Services, he concurs with the Duke in thinking that it will be best to bring the subject, through the Secretary of War, before the Cabinet, who will report upon it and tender the Queen their advice. This course was accordingly taken. The introduction of Courts of Honour appeared to the Cabinet to be surrounded by too many practical difficulties. The idea was therefore abandoned, and it was resolved to effect the desired reform by an amendment of the Articles of War. In pursuance of this decision Amended Articles were issued in April 1844, which declared it to be 'suitable to the character of honourable men to apologise and offer redress for wrong or insult committed, and equally so for the party aggrieved to accept frankly and cordially explanation and apologies for the same.'

The Prince had the satisfaction of seeing that he had not taken up the question in vain; for a deathblow was dealt by this declaration to so-called affairs of honour. Duelling was so discredited that it became from that time practically impossible. A change so great could scarcely be effected without some temporary injury to the tone of manners. On natures of a certain cast the dread of being called out exerted a salutary restraint. We are still occasionally reminded, by some *brusquerie* of manner or recklessness of language, that it might not be without value as a check on selfishness, or boorish rudeness. But on all refined and generous natures the consciousness that this restraint no longer exists has had the effect of inspiring that higher restraint of inward courtesy and forbearance, which makes the grace of good society.

CHAPTER X.

It had long been the desire of the Queen to visit King *Louis Philippe, to make the personal acquaintance of his* admirable Queen, and to see them and their family in their own home. The most cordial relations had for many years subsisted between their respective Houses,[1] and it was conceived that a friendly visit, made without any political object, might have a good effect in removing the lingering asperity which had been occasioned in France by the action of the English Government on the Eastern Question. A favourable opportunity for making this visit now presented itself. The country, with the gradual revival of trade and increased employment for its artisans, had regained its tranquillity, and the rising of Parliament after a comparatively quiet Session was close at hand. 'For many reasons,' Stockmar wrote to the Prince from Wiesbaden (18th August, 1843), 'I wish your contemplated excursion may be safely and pleasantly carried out, and in a way to cheer and gladden you.

[1] The King, when Duke of Orleans, had been a most intimate friend of Her Majesty's father the Duke of Kent, as well as of the Princess Charlotte, and her husband Prince Leopold. This was the beginning of the intimacy, which led to the *many* alliances (four) between the Orleans and Coburg families. These naturally brought them into close connection with the Queen long before her marriage with Prince Albert, the Duchess of Kent being a Princess of Coburg, sister to King Leopold, and to the Prince Consort's father the late Duke of Coburg. A *mistaken impression* prevails very generally that the Queen's connection with the Orleans family began after her marriage, while, in fact, it had subsisted since the marriage, in 1832, of her uncle King Leopold with the Princess Louise of Orleans.

Any opportunity for observing real life, and for interrupting the monotony that attends an exalted position, is a great gain for Your Royal Highness. It gives fresh nourishment and vigour to the mind. Parliament, let us hope, will rise at the right time, and Ireland remain quiet.'

The French Royal family were at Château d'Eu, near Tréport, a private domain of the King's, which could be reached in a few hours from Southampton; and the new yacht, 'Victoria and Albert,' which had just been built for the Queen, could not better initiate her career than in such an expedition. Parliament was prorogued on the 27th of August. On the 28th the Queen and Prince embarked at Southampton, and after cruising about the Isle of Wight and along the coast of Devon for a couple of days, they crossed to Tréport, where they arrived about 6 P.M. on the 2nd of September. Immediately the King came off in his barge to welcome them. The Prince de Joinville, who had met the Royal yacht off Cherbourg early that morning, and had then come on board, was on the look-out, and when he reported its approach, Her Majesty's *Journal* records: 'I felt, as it came nearer and nearer, more and more agitated. At length it came close, and contained the King, Aumale, Montpensier, Augustus' (Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, first-cousin of the Queen and Prince, and married to the Princess Clémentine of Orleans), 'M. Guizot, Lord Cowley, and various officers and ministers. The good kind King was standing on the boat, and so impatient to get out that it was very difficult to prevent him, and to get him to wait till the boat was close enough. He got out and came up as quickly as possible, and embraced me warmly. It was a fine and really affecting sight, and the emotion which it caused I shall never forget. . . . The King expressed again and again how delighted he was to see me. His barge is a very fine one, with many oars, and the men in white, with red sashes, and red ribbons round their hats.'

No time was lost in getting away from the yacht, and presently the novel spectacle was seen of the Royal Standards of France and England floating side by side over the Sovereigns of the two countries, as they were rowed in the French Royal barge to shore. 'The landing,' Her Majesty continues, 'was a fine sight, which the beauty of the evening, with the setting sun, enhanced. Crowds of people (all so different from ours), numbers of troops (also so different from our troops), the whole Court, and all the authorities, were assembled on the shore. The King led me up a somewhat steepish staircase, where the Queen received me with the kindest welcome, accompanied by dearest Louise' (Queen of the Belgians), 'Hélène, in deep mourning' (Duchess of Orleans), 'Françoise' (Princess of Joinville), 'and Madame Adélaide. All this—the cheering of the people, and of the troops, crying "Vive la Reine! Vive le Roi!"—well nigh overcame me. . . . The King repeated again and again to me how happy he was at the visit, and how attached he was to my father and to England.'

The visit, which lasted till the 7th, was one of unmixed pleasure on both sides. The Queen, in writing from Eu on the 4th, speaks of her delight at being 'in the midst of this admirable and truly amiable family, where we are quite at home, and as if we were one of them.' They, on the other hand, were not behind in reciprocating this feeling, and not less attracted by that charm of sincerity and ready delight in all simple pleasures which distinguished their guests.

Some further extracts from Her Majesty's *Journal* will be read with interest.

'*Sunday.*

'Rose at half-past seven. I felt as though it were a dream that I was at Eu, and that my favourite air-castle of so many years was at length realised. But it is no dream—it is a

pleasant reality. . . . The morning was lovely, and the distant ringing of the church bells (much prettier than ours) was the only thing to remind me of Sunday; for the mill was going, and the people were sweeping and working in the garden. The Château is very pretty. . . .

'Louise and Clémentine came out of their rooms to meet us. Dear, angelic Louise is so kind to us, and continually asking what we wish and like. They are all so kind and so delightful, so united that it does one's heart good to see it, and I feel at home with them all—as if I were one of them. At half-past ten the King and Queen and whole family, except poor Hélène (who only comes after dinner and after breakfast), took us to breakfast. . . . The King has such spirits, and is full of anecdote. After breakfast we went upstairs into the *Galerie des Guises*. Poor Hélène joined us. Though not good-looking, she is certainly very pleasing and graceful—very tall, extremely thin, and in deep mourning, which it is most melancholy to see. I see how painful it is to dearest Louise, and how the sight of this interesting widow recalls their misfortune to her mind. . . .

'At half-past two the King and Queen, &c. came to fetch us, and took us over the greater part of the Château. The number of family pictures is quite enormous. The little chapel is beautiful, and full of painted windows and statues of saints, &c.—quite a little *bijou*. It is the first Catholic chapel I have seen. There are numbers of pictures and reminiscences of Mademoiselle de Montpensier. She built part of the Château, and there are some interior decorations still of her time. The rooms of the Queen, including a little *cabinet de toilette*, are charming. They contain many old family pictures, and pictures of their own family, and there are some of poor Chartres when a child, the sight of which, we see, is heartrending to the dear, excellent Queen. We then set out on a drive . . .

'The people are very respectable-looking and very civil, crying, "Vive la Reine d'Angleterre!" The King is so pleased. The caps of the women are very picturesque, and they wear also coloured handkerchiefs and aprons, which look very pretty. . . . It is the population, and not so much the country, which strikes me as so extremely different from England—their faces, dress, manners, everything.

'*Monday, September* 4.

'Up at half-past seven and breakfasted at eight. Good news from the children. The band of the 24th Regiment (*Infanterie légère*) played under my window, and extremely well. They are 55 in number. . . . At half-past ten the King and family came and fetched us to their delightful, cheerful breakfast. I sat between the King and Aumale. I feel so gay and happy with these dear people. . . . Later we saw M. Guizot, who came to express his great joy at our visit. It seems to have done the greatest good, and to have caused the greatest satisfaction to the French. . . . I hear that I should have been most kindly received at Paris even. The French naval officers give this evening a banquet on board the "Pluton" to our naval officers, and I trust that the "*haine pour les perfides Anglais*" will cease.'

The *Journal* then records the features presented by the country and people during another drive to an adjoining forest, where a *Fête champêtre* had been prepared. 'I sat,' it proceeds, 'between the King and Queen. Poor Hélène sat next the King: it was the first time she had sat at table with them since her terrible misfortune. . . . The King's liveliness and vivacity, and little *impatiences*, are my delight and amusement. We returned at a quarter to six. It was a delightful *Fête champêtre*, and, as Albert said, much like the *Fêtes* in Germany. I feel very gay and amused, and the young people are so merry. . . .

'At dinner the King told me that the French officers had a dinner at which my health had been drunk with great enthusiasm: "*ce qui n'est pas mal pour des soldats Français*," he added; and he repeated again and again his wish to become more and more closely allied with the English, which would be the sure means of preventing war in Europe, and that his love for the English "*était dans le sang.*" After dinner there was very fine music by the *artistes du Conservatoire*. They played beautifully, particularly the things from Beethoven's Symphonies.

'*Tuesday, September 5.*

'Albert got up at half-past six in order to go and see the *Carabiniers* with Aumale. . . . At ten dear Hélène came to me with little Paris, and stayed till the King and Queen and family came to fetch us to breakfast. She is very clever and sensible, and shows great courage and strength of mind. She spoke with tears in her eyes of my sympathy in her joys and her griefs—poor, excellent Hélène. . . . Before we went to our rooms the King took us downstairs, where he gave us two splendid pieces of Gobelins,[2] which have been thirty years in hand, and a beautiful box of Sèvres china. After writing, &c., dear Louise came to me, and I went with her and paid my visits to the Queen and Princesses. . . . The dear excellent Queen, whom one must look up to and love, . . . so kindly said that she had always had "*un sentiment maternel pour moi*," but that this had increased since she knew me. From her we went to "la Tante," who is exceedingly kind to me. . . . Nothing is done without her being asked.

[2] These fine tapestries are now in the room known as 'the Oak Room,' at Windsor Castle.

'*Wednesday, September* 6.

'Albert off at seven to bathe. I up before eight. . . . The band again played under my window, as yesterday and the day before. . . . At breakfast I sat between the King and Aumale. We were so much amused at the King's ordering, at this late hour, everything to be ready for a *Déjeuner dans la forêt*. The King told me that Joinville would accompany us back to Brighton. . . . I showed the Queen the miniatures of Puss and the Boy, which she admired extremely, and she said to us so dearly, so kindly, "*Que Dieu les bénisse, et qu'ils puissent ne jamais vous donner du chagrin.*" I then expressed a wish that they might become like her children, and she said, in one thing she hoped they might, viz., "*dans leur attachement pour leurs parents. Mais ils donnent aussi du chagrin.*" In saying this, she looked down, her eyes filled with tears, and she added, "*Enfin, ce que Dieu veut!*"

'At two we set off with the whole company in *char-à-bancs*, Albert sitting in front with the King, then I with the Queen (for whom I feel a filial affection), and behind us Louise and the other Princesses. . . . We arrived at St. Catherine, a *garde-chasse*. The day was beautiful, and the *endroit* of the *forêt* charming. After walking about for some little time in the garden, we all sat down to a *déjeuner* under the trees, I sitting between the King and Queen. It was so pretty, so merry, so *champêtre*; and it is quite wonderful the rapidity with which everything had been arranged. . . . We came home (the evening lovely), at half-past six. . . . After dinner, we remained in a little room near the dining-room, as the *Galerie*, where we generally are, was fitted up as *un petit théâtre*. At a little after nine we went in. The little stage and *orchestre* were perfectly arranged, and we were all seated in rows of chairs one above the other. The pieces were all admirably performed. The first was *Le Château de*

ma Nièce, in which Madame Mira acted delightfully; the second, *L'Humoriste*, in which Arnal sent us into fits of laughter. The speech in which he read out of a paper the following advertisement, "*Une Dame Espagnole désire entrer dans une maison, où il y a des enfants, afin de pouvoir leur montrer sa langue*," was enough to kill one. . . .

'*Thursday, September* 7.

'At a quarter to six we got up, *le cœur gros*, at the thought that we must leave this dear, admirable family. At half-past six the King (who with all the Princes was in uniform), and the Queen and all the family, came to fetch us to breakfast. Joinville was already gone to Tréport. I felt so sad to go. At half-past seven we went in the large state carriage, precisely as we came the day we arrived, with the Princes riding, and the same escort, &c. It was a lovely morning, and many people out. We embarked in the King's fine barge with great facility. The King and Queen, and Louise, and all the Princesses, and Admiral Mackau were with us in the barge. The Princes, our suite, and the King's gentlemen and Ministers, &c., followed us on board. . . . At last the *mauvais moment* arrived, and we were obliged to take leave, and with very great regret. . . . It was a pleasure to keep Joinville, who is so amiable, and our great favourite. The dear Queen said, when she paid me that visit yesterday, in speaking of the children, "*Je vous les recommande, Madame, quand nous ne serons plus, ainsi qu'au Prince Albert; que vous les protégiez; ce sont des amis de cœur.*" . . . We stood on the side of the paddle-box, and waited to see them pass by in a small steamer, which they had all got into; and the King waved his hand and called out "Adieu! Adieu!" We set off before nine . . . At half-past three we got into the barge off Brighton, with Joinville, the ladies, Lord Aberdeen, and M. Touchard. When we arrived at

the Pavilion, we took Joinville upstairs with us, and he was very much struck with the strangeness of the building.'

A visit of this nature could not take place without giving rise to all kinds of idle speculation as to its object and motives. Every reason for it was divined but the true one, which was simply a desire on both sides to cement by personal intercourse a friendship, that had grown up through years of correspondence, and been strengthened by the ties of intermarriage. No exchange of views took place on political subjects, beyond the voluntary declaration of the King, in a conversation with the Queen, the Prince, and Lord Aberdeen, which was painfully belied by subsequent events, that no designs were entertained which could have the effect of placing any of his sons on the throne of Spain.

From Brighton, to which the Queen and Prince went for a few days, on their way to visit King Leopold in Belgium, the Prince wrote to Baron Stockmar:—

'Dear Stockmar,—At last I am able to write you a couple of lines. Our expedition has gone off admirably. We have not deviated in any particular from the plan we chalked out in the month of July, and we have timed all our movements to the minute. Heaven favoured us with glorious weather, and nothing has occurred to occasion us the very slightest discomfort. The English coast is splendid, especially Torquay, Dartmouth, and Plymouth, and our sojourn at Eu was most interesting and delightful. The old King was in the third heaven of rapture, and the whole family received us with a heartiness, I might say affection, which was quite touching. Victoria was greatly struck by the novelty of the scene, and is in low spirits that it is over. Joinville accompanied us on our return, and stayed here two nights. I have rarely been so pleased with any young man. His views are unusually

sound. He is straightforward, honourable, gifted, and amiable, but very deaf.

'. . . All the French wore the expression of high satisfaction in their looks, and were unflagging in their courtesy towards us, down even to our servants. The effect which the excursion has produced is excellent. The French were flattered and gratified, and their only regret was, not to see us in Paris, where great enthusiasm was certain to have been shown. The public here are thoroughly satisfied with the excursion. Six newspaper reporters were in Eu, who reported everything in the minutest detail. Lord Brougham wrote to me yesterday to congratulate Victoria and myself "on the admirable effects produced by the late excursion to France, and on the sure tendency of this wise measure to create the best feelings between the two nations." I believe myself that this will be the case. Aberdeen was thoroughly satisfied with everything, and made himself much liked. He and Liverpool were with us on the yacht. The Ambassadors of the Northern Powers, however, spit fire, which is very injudicious, for if they do not wish for war, and are to keep up business relations with France, nothing can be more dangerous or a greater drawback to these relations than to leave the French public in a state of frantic excitement, in which no business can possibly be carried on with a chance of good results. The Emperor of Russia will be annoyed, but that is neither here nor there.

'The family of Louis Philippe have a strong feeling that for the last thirteen years they have been placed under a ban, as though they were lepers, by all Europe, and by every Court, and expelled from the society of reigning Houses, and therefore they rate very highly the visit of the most powerful Sovereign in Europe. The King said this to me over and over again. Guizot and Aberdeen, as might be expected, are being abused by both parties for betraying their country.

'Little passed of a political nature, except the declaration of Louis Philippe to Aberdeen that he will not give his son to Spain, even if he were asked; and Aberdeen's answer, that, excepting one of his sons, any aspirant whom Spain might choose would be acceptable to England.

'We found the children here quite well; and think of leaving the little heir to the throne here for some time after his sister's return to Windsor. To-morrow, the 12th, we embark again, and expect to be in Ostend by the evening of the 13th. From there we shall probably make some excursions to the interesting old cities of Flanders. I grieve to hear we shall not find you there. You have gone back to Coburg; and Praetor [the Prince's private librarian] tells me, that in your better moods you are half disposed to return here before long. *Promise me at least that you will be here before November.* . .

'ALBERT.'

'Brighton, September 10, 1843.'

To this Baron Stockmar replied:—

'Coburg, 18th September, 1843.

'The receipt of the gracious communications of the Queen and of Your Royal Highness has gladdened me to the heart. I scarcely dared to expect that a plan, which depended on so many outward circumstances and contingencies, should have been carried out so punctually, so completely, and so pleasantly, and I therefore regard what has happened as a kind providence of Heaven, for which my heart overflows with gratitude. There is every probability that the second part of the expedition came off under glorious weather, and I long to receive an early and satisfactory communication on that score. You, my dear Prince, have hitherto had good fortune, and you have gained materially in address. On your life's path lies much that might mislead you. Pray be mindful

of the entreaty, the warning of a true friend, who loves you with a father's love, and firmly and manfully resist everything that might lead you astray. In all things let reason be your guide, and your lode-star be what you see and how to as the Right. If Heaven grant my prayer for the Queen, then will it give you *great fertile thoughts and a pure heart*, valiantly to withstand the seduction of this world's vanities.

'You wish me to promise to be with you again in November. Any promise which I permit myself to give can only rest on a sincere belief that its fulfilment is really within my power. This faith I have not at the present moment. Since the 5th of August I have grown much worse than when you saw me last.

'Present my homage to the Queen. She has written me a most cheerful letter full of just such impressions and emotions as I could wish for her and for yourself.'

After a six days' tour in Belgium, in which Bruges, Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp were visited, the Queen and Prince returned to Windsor Castle on the 21st of September. This visit had an interest for the Queen, even beyond what the country itself was fitted to create, rich as it is in art and in historical monuments and associations. 'It was such a joy for me,' writes Her Majesty to King Leopold from her yacht, within a few hours after they had parted, 'to be once again under the roof of one, who has ever been a father to me.' The general results of the excursion were thus summed up by the Prince in a letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'Our travels are now over, and have left behind them in our minds a most agreeable impression. Never have I seen such enthusiasm as the Belgians showed us at every step, and the excitement of feelings cannot fail to be of great service to our Uncle, as the delight at our visit was combined with the national feeling, that it afforded a fresh guarantee

for the continuance of the present state of things. The old cities of Flanders had put on their fairest array, and were very tastefully decorated with tapestries, flowers, trees, pictures, &c. &c., which, combined with the numerous old monuments, churches and convents, and the gay crowds of people, produced a most peculiar effect.

'Victoria was greatly interested and impressed; and the cordiality and friendliness which met us everywhere could not fail to attract her towards the Belgian people.

'We found Uncle and Aunt very well, and greatly delighted at our visit. The children are blooming. Little Charlotte[3] is quite the prettiest child you ever saw. . . Leopold and Philippe are very tall of their age, and quite strong and vigorous.

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, September 24, 1843.'

In the following month the Prince made his first acquaintance with the University of which he was not long afterwards to become the Chancellor. On the 25th of October he accompanied the Queen to Cambridge, where they were received with a cordiality which seems almost to have taken the Royal visitors by surprise. 'I seldom remember more enthusiasm,' the Queen writes a few days afterwards, 'than was shown at Cambridge, and in particular by the undergraduates.' The acclamations with which they greeted the Prince, when his degree of D.C.L. was conferred, were especially welcome as coming from a body of generous and cultivated young men, who were likely to play a not unimportant part in the coming years. But old and young vied with each other in enthusiasm, and the gravest heads in these quiet seats of study seem to have been as alive with excitement as the youngest.

This may be gathered from the following amusing account,

[3] Afterwards married to the Archduke Maximilian.

in a letter of the 4th November by Professor Sedgwick, of a visit of the Royal party to the Woodwardian Museum. Nor is this letter without a special value in the testimony it affords to the Prince's familiarity with a branch of geological study which was then almost exclusively confined to purely scientific men :—

'. . . . I received a formidable note from our Master, telling me of an intended Royal visit to the Woodwardian den of wild beasts, immediately after Prince Albert's degree; and enjoining me to clear a passage by a side entrance through the old divinity schools. This threw me off my balance, for since the building of the new Library this place of ancient theological disputation has been converted into a kind of lumber-room, and was filled from end to end with every kind of unclean thing. Mops, slop-pails, chimney-pots, ladders, broken benches, rejected broken cabinets, two long ladders, and an old rusty scythe were the things that met the eye, and all covered with half an inch of venerable dust. There is at the end of the room a kind of gallery or gangway, by which the undergraduates used to find their way to my lecture-room; but this was also full of every kind of rubbish and abomination. We did our best—soon tumbled all impediments into the area below, spread huge mats over the slop-pails, &c., and in a time incredibly short a goodly red carpet was spread along the gangway, and thence down my lecture-room to the door of the Museum; but still there was a dreadful evil to encounter. What we had done brought out such a rank compound of villanous smells, that even my plebeian nose was sorely put to it; so I went to a chemist's, procured certain bottles of sweet odours, and sprinkled them cunningly where most wanted.

'Inside the Museum all was previously in order, and inside the entrance door from the gangway was a huge picture of the Megatherium under which the Queen must pass to the Museum, and at that place I was to receive Her Majesty. So I dusted my outer garments and ran to the Senate House, and I was just in time to see the Prince take his degree and join in the acclamations. This ended, I ran back to the feet of the Megatherium, and in a few minutes the Royal party entered the mysterious gangway above described. They halted, I half thought in a spirit of mis-

chief, to contemplate the furniture of the Schools; and the Vice-Chancellor (Whewell) pointed out the beauties of the dirty spot, where Queen Bess had sate 250 years before, when she presided at the Divinity Act. A few steps more brought them under the feet of the Megatherium. I bowed as low as my anatomy would let me, and the Queen and Prince bowed again most graciously, and so began Act first. The Queen seemed happy and well pleased, and was mightily taken with one or two of my monsters, especially with the Plesiosaurus and gigantic stag. The subject was new to her; but the Prince evidently had a good general knowledge of the old world, and not only asked good questions, and listened with great courtesy to all I had to say, but in one or two instances helped me on by pointing to the rare things in my collection, especially in that part of it which contains the German fossils. I thought myself very fortunate in being able to exhibit the finest collection of German fossils to be seen in England. They fairly went the round of the Museum, neither of them seemed in a hurry, and the Queen was quite happy to hear her husband talk about a novel subject with so much knowledge and spirit.

'He called her back once or twice to look at a fine impression of a dragon-fly which I have in the Solenhope slate. Having glanced at the long succession of our fossils, from the youngest to the oldest, the party again moved into the lecture-room. The Queen was again mightily taken with the long neck of the Plesiosaurus; under it was a fine head of an Ichthyosaurus, which I had just been unpacking. I did not know anything about it, as I had myself never seen its face before, for it arrived in my absence. The Queen asked what it was. I told her as plainly as I could. She then asked whence it came; and what do you think I said? That I did not know the exact place, but I believed it came as a delegate from the monsters of the lower world to greet Her Majesty on her arrival at the University. I did not repeat this till I found that I had been overheard, and that my impertinence had been talked of among my Cambridge friends. All was, however, taken in good part, and soon afterwards the Royal party again approached the mysterious gangway. The Queen and Prince bowed, the Megatherium packed up his legs close under the abdominal region of his august body, the Royal pageant passed under, and was soon out of my sight and welcomed by the cheers of the multitudes before the Library.

'I will only add that I went through every kind of backward movement to the admiration of all beholders, only having once trodden on the hinder part of my cassock, and never once having fallen during my retrogradations before the face of the Queen. In short, had I been a King Crab, I could not have walked backwards better.'

The following extract from a letter of the Prince to Baron Stockmar, conveys the impression produced on himself by what he had seen and heard during the two crowded days spent in this little tour:—

. . . We returned the day before yesterday from our very interesting and useful excursion to Cambridge. We went there on the 25th; arrived about two o'clock, alighted at the Lodge of Trinity College, received the Addresses of the University, then went to the beautiful chapel of King's College, where we attended Divine Service, and held a levee in the evening, at which all the Doctors, Heads of Houses, Bachelors, Fellows of Colleges and M.A.'s were presented. Next morning we went to the Senate House, where, with many ancient forms and Latin speeches, the dignity of Doctor was conferred upon me. After this we visited the Library, the Museum, and most of the Colleges, which are wonderfully beautiful. The enthusiasm of the students was tremendous; and I cannot remember that we were ever received anywhere so well as upon the road to Cambridge (to which 2,000 horsemen accompanied us) and in Cambridge itself. In the evening we went to Wimpole to Lord Hardwicke, where we passed two nights. On the 27th, we went from there to see Bourne, the country seat of Lord Delawarr; and on the evening of the same day Lord Hardwicke gave a ball to the whole county of Cambridge. We returned to Windsor the following morning. . .

'In Ireland things are in a very critical state. The Whigs are very sanguine of being back in office before long. . .

The country is tranquil, the revenue improving, commerce flourishing, and extraordinary activity prevails in the manufacturing districts. Colonel Malcolm has brought from China a well-arranged and very low commercial tariff. The navigation of the Indus along its whole course has been opened up by Lord Ellenborough. The prices of cattle are up again. I have netted a very good return from my auction in the Park.[3] . . .

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, October 30, 1843.'

It was not without reason that Baron Stockmar had made it one of the conditions of the excursions to France and Belgium that Ireland should remain quiet. That country, as the Prince here says, was in a most critical state. The Repeal Agitation had for some time assumed an aspect of the greatest gravity. O'Connell, emboldened by the apparent inaction of the Government, had indulged in language, which, however skilfully veiled, clearly pointed to insurrection and violence. He continued to draw together immense masses of the population at monster meetings, where his suggestions of appeals to physical force to compel the concession of a separate Parliament for Ireland became every day more daring. At last his followers began to talk of their 'repeal infantry and cavalry,' and to rally to the cry 'Repeal or Blood.' The time for decisive action by the Government had come; and they seized the occasion of a proposed meeting of unusually monstrous dimensions at Clontarf, to issue a proclamation forbidding the meeting, and calling on all well-disposed persons to abstain from attending it. Seeing that

[3] At the end of 1840 the Prince established a model farm at Windsor, and continued till the close of his life to take the most lively interest, both there and at Osborne, in the breeding of stock, and in the introduction of agricultural improvements. Nothing that tended to raise the efficiency of farming escaped his notice.

the Government were in earnest, the Repeal Association at once abandoned their project. But their dismay was complete when O'Connell himself, and the leaders of the Association, were arrested a few days afterwards (8th October), on a charge of conspiracy, sedition, and unlawful assembling. Nor was this diminished when, after a prolonged trial, the jury in the following month of May returned a verdict finding all the prisoners guilty on several of the counts of the indictment, and O'Connell was sentenced to a year's confinement, and ordered to pay a fine of 2,000*l.*, and to enter into heavy recognizances to keep the peace for seven years. The verdict was subsequently set aside upon technical grounds by the House of Lords. But the purpose of the Government had already been effected. The popular faith in O'Connell had received a shock, from which it never recovered, and with it his influence for good or evil dwindled into insignificance.

So little could this result have been foreseen a few months previously, that a belief was very generally entertained that the decided measures adopted against the great agitator and his allies would raise a storm, before which the Peel Administration would be driven from power. This view would seem, from a passage in the following letter, to have been shared by Baron Stockmar. Matters had, however, reached a point where more than the stability of this or that Ministry was at stake. But, knowing, as Stockmar did, the power of the Irish vote in deciding majorities, he had only too much cause for the fear he expresses, that victory in the O'Connell trial might be more serious to the Government than failure.

'Coburg, November 27, 1843.

'On my return home some days ago from a two months' tour, I found a mass of letters from my well-wishers and friends, which had arrived for me during my absence.

Among these were three from Your Royal Highness, that gave me sincere pleasure, because they were written with a clearness of perception, and in a sagacious spirit, which do honour to my beloved Prince. Continue to exercise with unflagging energy and courage your great talent for seeing clearly, and arriving through clearness at the truth.

'The results will be commensurate with the character of your efforts, and will therefore bring their own reward. Nature has endowed you with the sharpness of eye to recognise the working of nature's laws, their interdependence, and the ends to which they work; and the logical cast of your mind will secure you against the mistake so common to princes, by which they are deluded into the notion, that they alone are exempt from the dominating force of these laws. And the influence most congenial to this great gift of yours, and best fitted to develope and strengthen it, will, as I have often told you, be *intimate intercourse with minds of a kindred order.* Only by the collision of mind with mind, which is not to be arrived at except by contact with men of mark, can you elicit those flashes of light which enable you to recognise new truths at a glance, and but for which these truths would for many a day, perhaps for ever, remain obscure and consequently unrecognised. In this way Your Royal Highness may often, as by an electric shock, gain impressions and glimpses of intelligence, which expand the limits of your being, and raise you up to a higher state of culture. And having once more called the attention of my favourite (*mein Liebling*) to the best I know for him, I pass on to the details of the communications made to me.

'First, let me congratulate the Queen and yourself upon the success of your visit to France and Belgium. It was a perfect success, and therefore will be of advantage to you, as indeed cannot but be obvious at a glance. Let us pause to ask why it was a success? Because it was thought well over

beforehand, because it was undertaken upon a definite plan, because the plan was *adhered to to the letter*. Let us make a vow *to carry out like things in the like way*.

'It is an old principle with me, to form no judgments at a distance upon matters which lie far away from my sphere of observation. Consequently, I can only express mere feelings in so far as personal matters are concerned. The news of the O'Connell trial took me by surprise, and threw me into an uneasy state of mind, that set me thinking, not so much what might ensue from a favourable or unfavourable issue to the prosecution, *as what the Ministry are to do with their victory, supposing them to get one?* To my thinking, victory is likely to prove more dangerous than failure, and apprehensions seized me which I still entertain, *that this trial may very possibly lead to a speedy termination of the Peel Ministry*. . . .

'In your position it is impossible for you to escape censure and calumny; to think otherwise, would be culpable self-delusion. *Do right, fear no one*, is for you both motto and shield, and on this last every blow aimed against you may be received with serene courage, for even although the vigour of the assault may serve to remind you that you are vulnerable, still no serious or damaging injury to you can possibly ensue. *In all ways admirable is the decision to hold yourself in reserve about trifles, so as to come fresh and unscathed into the field on great occasions*, and this has been from all time the view of every able and noble-minded warrior. The few people who are and may be hostile to you, from selfishness, from interest thwarted, from wounded vanity, from a false estimate of your character, from a propensity to calumny and detraction, are confined to the aristocracy and the official class; and if you do not let yourself be disconcerted by their attacks, but meet them with courage and good humour, you will soon find you can afford to laugh at and despise them.

'Your Royal Highness can never rate too highly the importance of the life of the Prince of Wales, or of his good education; for your own interests, political, moral, mental and material, are so intimately and inseparably bound up with those of the Prince, that every shortcoming in his training and culture is certain to be avenged upon his father.'

On the 20th of November, during a visit of the Queen and himself to Sir Robert Peel at Drayton Manor, the Prince availed himself of the occasion to make a run to Birmingham, and to inspect some of its chief manufactories. His reasons were twofold: first, because Birmingham was one of the chief cities in the kingdom, and next, because he felt it to be his duty to become personally conversant with the leading manufactures which formed the basis of its wealth, and the present opportunity of doing so ought not therefore to be lost. Birmingham was the stronghold of Chartism, and had recently been the scene of several violent outbreaks. Some of the Ministry, therefore, threw cold water on the Prince's project, from an apprehension that his presence might lead to unpleasant demonstrations of a political character. The Prince, however, better understood the temper of the people, and was not to be deterred from carrying out his plan. The event showed he was right in relying as he did on the good and loyal feeling of the population:—

'The 280,000 people in Birmingham,' Mr. Anson writes, in a Memorandum made the same day, 'seemed to have turned out upon the occasion; the streets were literally jammed, but nothing could exceed the good humour and good feeling and apparent excess of loyalty which pervaded the whole multitude. There was not a single instance to the contrary amidst those dense masses. All vied with each other to do honour to the Prince's visit, which they have taken as the greatest compliment. The Mayor, who accompanied the Prince in the carriage, is said to be

a Chartist, and to hold extreme views. He said that the visit had created the greatest enthusiasm—that it had brought into unison and harmony opposite political parties who had shown the deepest hatred towards each other, and that it had been productive of the happiest results in Birmingham. He also said he would vouch for the devoted loyalty of the whole Chartist body. The Queen had not more loyal subjects in her dominions.'

Besides visiting five of the most important manufactories, the Prince went to the Town Hall, where he heard the fine organ played, and also to King Edward VI.'s School. He was particularly interested on finding, from its Head Master, Dr. Lee (afterwards Bishop of Manchester), that, although strictly a Church of England Foundation, there were 400 Dissenters among the boys, and that the whole scheme worked most harmoniously. Not satisfied with such hurried explanations as were possible at the time, he immediately afterwards applied to Dr. Lee for the full details of the system by which a result so happy was worked out.

From Drayton Manor the Royal party proceeded to Chatsworth on the 1st of December. After three days spent amid the charming scenery that surrounds the Palace of the Peak, made more delightful by the distinguished courtesy and almost regal hospitality of its owner, they passed on to Belvoir Castle, attended wherever they went by the warmest demonstrations of loyal attachment.

At Belvoir a great hunting party was assembled. The Prince was never, as has been already said, a great devotee to field sports. On this occasion, however, he carried off the honours of the hunting-field. 'We had a capital run,' writes Mr. Anson, with whom fox-hunting was a passion, 'and the Prince rode admirably, to the amazement of most, who were not at all prepared to find him excel in the art.' Why they should not have been so it is not easy to divine, unless they acted on the absurd assumption, that one who was so well

known for his high cultivation and artistic tastes was not likely to have a good seat, or spirit to face the rough work of a run across country. 'One can scarcely credit the absurdity of people,' the Queen writes to King Leopold a few days afterwards, 'but Albert's riding so boldly has made such a sensation that it has been written all over the country, and they make much more of it than if he had done some great act!' The Prince maintained his character as a bold rider in the field; still he indulged in the sport but seldom, in compliance with the wish of Her Majesty that a life so valuable should not be exposed to the risks which it involves.[5]

It will be seen from the following letter to Baron Stockmar how modestly the Prince speaks of his achievements in this way at Belvoir:—

'The children in whose welfare you take so kindly an interest are making most favourable progress. The eldest, "Pussy," is now quite a little personage. She speaks English and French with great fluency and choice of phrase.[6] . . The little gentleman is grown much stronger than he was. . . The youngest is the beauty of the family, and is an extraordinarily good and merry child. . . .

'Ireland is to all appearances perfectly quiet at present. Everything, however, is being got ready for the struggle in the Queen's Bench.[7] . .

[5] In a few years he gave it up altogether. It was impossible for one who was so sure to be observed to adopt the half measures of Fred Vincy in *Middlemarch*, who 'kept his love of horsemanship, but rarely allowed himself a day's hunting; and when he did so, it was remarkable that he submitted to be laughed at for cowardliness at the fences, seeming to see Mary and the boys sitting on the five-barred gate, and showing their curly heads between hedge and ditch.'

[6] 'Our *Pussette*,' the Queen writes a few weeks afterwards, 'learns a verse of Lamartine by heart, which ends with "Le tableau se déroule à mes pieds." To show how well she understood this difficult line, I must tell you the following *bon-mot*. When she was riding on her pony, and looking at the cows and sheep, she turned to Madame Charrier (her governess), and said, "Voilà le tableau qui se déroule à mes pieds!" Is not this extraordinary for a child of three years?'

[7] The trial of O'Connell and others.

'Our visit to Drayton has made the Premier very happy, and is calculated to strengthen his position.

'I went from there to Birmingham to see its manufactures. Sir James Graham and others had advised me strongly not to go, as the town is entirely in the hands of the Chartists, and even the Radicals dare not show themselves in it. Nevertheless, I was received with an indescribable enthusiasm. The people regarded the visit as a great proof of confidence, and did all they could to give assurance of their loyalty. In short, our excursion was one unbroken triumph.

'The Queen Dowager was at Drayton, and some of the Ministers. At Chatsworth there was a large and brilliant assemblage of the leading Whigs, and at Belvoir of the fashionable hunting men of Melton and Leicester. Here I took part in a regular fox-hunt, had a capital run, and moreover distinguished myself by keeping well up with the hounds all through. Anson and Bouverie both fell on my left and right, whilst I came off with a whole skin. . . .

'Now to come back to sacred matters. The day after to-morrow the Chapel[8] is to be consecrated, and by the Bishop of Oxford. . . .

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, December 17, 1843.'

The narrative of the important incidents of this year, which exercised a material influence upon the position of the Prince, as well as upon the affairs of Europe, may be fitly concluded by the following passages of a letter addressed to him by Baron Stockmar in the beginning of 1844 :—

'The opening of Parliament within the next few days brings me to politics. The Corn Law League and O'Connell's trial are incidents of the weightiest moment, on the progress and results of which I forbid myself even to speculate.

[8] The private Chapel in Windsor Castle, which had just been completed under the Prince's directions.

Remote as I am from the scene of action, and consequently without the means of observing the essential details in their bearing one upon another, all such speculations must in a most special sense be mere empty amateur-talk.

'Your recent excursions to Drayton, Birmingham, &c., have in the most delightful and useful way worked into combination with your former one across the sea; and I can in all justice congratulate you upon the results of the whole series. The most important of these results seem to me to have been the following, which I will, therefore, commend to the special consideration, probing, and just appreciation of Your Royal Highness.

'Thiers' vapouring had disturbed at the most inopportune season the subsisting relations between France and England. What frequently happens with individuals had consequently come to pass with a great people, viz., a sense of irritation had, by reason of an attitude truly childish about trifles and misunderstandings in themselves insignificant, risen to a dangerous height, and the French and their leaders for the time played into the hands of Russia and that country's policy, which was imperilling the peace of Europe. All who had the true well-being of our quarter of the globe at heart regretted these occurrences, no one more than your Uncle in Brussels.

'The remark I then continually made, that when trifles estrange nations, things just as trifling may bring them together again, was received with incredulous shakings of the head, and yet we have lived to see my views made good. As we all know, and know beyond all doubt, the Queen paid her visits to France and Belgium without the shadow of a political object. So much the better for the Queen and for England, and better still for the French and France, for only out of the absence of a political purpose could a result so desirable have sprung. And what was this

result, and how was it brought about? The friendly spontaneous visit of the Queen flattered not a little the national vanity of the French, and, let our adversaries say what they please, it allayed the irritation of their feelings. To such of the French as were reasonable and well disposed, it was a something they had yearned for, which came upon them by surprise. The volatile, who joined the crowd in keeping up the soreness against England, were pleased; the real political adversaries of England were touched by a courtesy to which even the disaffected Frenchman is not wholly insensible.

'How greatly must these influences of necessity react upon the French people, upon Louis Philippe, and upon his Ministers! To both the opportunity has been given, should they be disposed to avail themselves of it, of reassuming the right attitude towards their own people and towards England, which they had lost through the *fanfaronnades* of M. Thiers. Whether all the good will be reaped that might be reaped, I cannot, situated as I am here, judge; still it is clear to me that an important step has already been made, and that now it only depends on the prudent deportment of the French and English towards each other, to turn this godsend to the fullest account.

'And now to the personal application of this event to Your Royal Highness, that I may omit no opportunity of enforcing my favourite principle that it is a man's duty constantly to try to bring into full consciousness the whole bearing of his actions. Without Your Royal Highness the thought of this enterprise would never have been carried to completion; but for you it was impossible it could have turned out so well. Take then your share of the merit, and lay it by in the casket in which you design to store up the achievements of your political activity. Often have I pointed out to you, how great an influence you will have it in your power, by virtue

of your position, to exercise upon the weal or woe of Europe. You have availed yourself, with tact and success, of the first opportunity that has come in your way. The results are before us. Take, then, in good part my hearty congratulations upon them.

'Your Royal Highness's rehabilitation in the good opinion of the fox-hunters is a thing to be viewed quite as you view it, and yet it is not without practical value so long as fox-hunting continues to be an English national pursuit.'

CHAPTER XI.

Baron Stockmar had not concluded the letter just quoted when the tidings reached him of the death at Gotha the previous day (29th January, 1844) of Prince Albert's father after a few hours' illness. The old physician had foreseen the probability of such an event, and had prepared the Prince to expect it. But the shock of such terrible surprises is not the less severe, however often the imagination may previously have pictured them; and the Baron knew so well the depth of the Prince's affection for his father, that he felt the blow would fall upon him with a stunning force. His words of sympathy were few, but of the best kind—drawing comfort from the past, and pointing to the claims of duty for the future. Happy the son who at such a time could be assured by so sincere a friend, as the Prince is assured by Stockmar in the conclusion of his letter, that he had failed in no single duty to his parent.

'I had written thus far yesterday,' says Stockmar, continuing his letter on the 30th January, 'when some hours ago we were surprised by the sad news from Gotha. Ever since have I been sharing, my dear Prince, in every thought and feeling which they must have awakened within you. The greatness and strength of my sympathy make me most keenly conscious of the full extent of my peculiar regard and affection for you. How thankful I am to Heaven that your grief can fall back upon the remembrance of a past, in which

no one thing can be found for which a good son can now have reason to feel remorse.

'A task of the dearest moment, and one which, connected as it is with the immediate cause of your grief, may even now while it is fresh fitly claim your attention, is the serious consideration of your brother's position and future. *Rarely, indeed, has the actual state of affairs made it at once so essential and so easy for a young prince on his accession to power to make a good and effective start.* Well for him, if he shall see his way to seek the right course at once, to find, and place himself upon it; and if he shall set out with public acts, which, bearing within themselves true theories of government as a vital principle, must secure him the respect of his own country, and thereby that of all Germany. Only by winning this respect can he secure the other essentials—confidence, affection, popularity—and only by it will he be enabled to thread, as by an unfailing clue, the perplexing mazes of a prince's life. To achieve it is not only possible, but in the early days (which, however, run quickly by) even extremely easy. God grant that he give himself good counsel, that he be counselled well by others, and above all that a beloved brother counsel him as a brother should, and as that brother's intelligence and character so peculiarly qualify him for doing.

'Thus, then, at a season full of grave earnestness do I lay the whole weal and woe of a poor little country—but that country your own native land—upon Your Royal Highness's heart. That your father's sudden demise could be little of a surprise to me, you will remember, as ever since your marriage I have often told you to expect his early and sudden death.'

The Prince's thoughts, after the first shock of the announcement, turned to the friend, of whose sympathy he

did not require this letter to be assured, and whose sage counsel in all emergencies had never failed him. So, too, did the Queen's—one with him in this, as in all else. 'Oh, if you could be here now with us!' Her Majesty writes to Baron Stockmar (4th February). 'My darling stands so alone, and his grief is so great and touching. . . . He says (forgive my bad writing, but my tears blind me), *I* am now *all* to him. Oh, if I can be, I shall be only too happy, but I am so disturbed and affected myself, I fear I can be but of little use.'[1] To Baron Stockmar the Prince himself wrote:

'Dear Stockmar,—My heart impels me to give vent to my tears upon the bosom of a true and loving friend. I have sustained a terrible loss, and can as yet scarcely believe it. I fancy I still hear your prophetic words ringing in my ears, that my poor father would die suddenly. So it has proved. God will give us all strength to bear the blow becomingly. That we were separated gives it a peculiar poignancy. Not to see him, not to be present to close his eyes, not to help to comfort those he leaves behind, and to be comforted by them, is very hard. Here we sit together, poor Mama, Victoria, and myself, and weep, with a great cold public around us, insensible as stone. To have some true sympathetic friends at hand would be a great solace. Come to us in this time of trouble, if come you can.

'With him it is well. I share your belief that his would have been a dreary old age; and even were not my faith strong in the Providence which shapes all things for our good, I should find consolation in this. Still for us the

[1] 'I have been with the Queen,' writes Lady Lyttelton in a letter at this time, 'a good deal altogether. She is very affecting in her grief, which is in truth all on the Prince's account, and every time she looks at him her eyes fill afresh. He has suffered dreadfully, being very fond of his father; and his separation from him, and the suddenness of the event, and his having expected to see him soon, all contribute to make it worse.'

loss is terrible. The parent stem has been levelled by the storm, and the branches, which are scattered all over the world, must now strike separate roots for themselves. May Love, Friendship, Harmony keep them all together! For me the father's house is for ever closed; that house, it did me good to think, I might return to upon occasion. The sweet feeling that thought inspired I shall never know again. This reflection shakes me to the centre.

'This shall not weaken my love for my widowed native land. I will help Ernest with heart and hand in the difficult task to which he is called. Unfortunately, I am greatly hampered by being so far away. How much need has poor Grandmama of consolation, who has now lost her last friend! And poor desolate Mama! The good Alexandrine[2] seems to me in the whole picture like the consoling angel. Just such is Victoria to me, who feels and shares my grief, and is the treasure on which my whole existence rests. The relation in which we stand to one another leaves nothing to desire. It is a union of heart and soul, and is therefore noble, and in it the poor children shall find their cradle, so as to be able one day to ensure a like happiness for themselves.

'Outside there is still much to do, and I long greatly for your wise and faithful counsel.

'The world is assuredly not our true happiness; and, alas! every day's experience forces me to see how wicked men are. Every imaginable calumny is heaped upon us, especially upon me; and although a pure nature, conscious of its own high purposes, is and ought to be lifted above attacks, still it is painful to be misrepresented by people of whom one believed better things.

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, February 4, 1844.'

It would be well for those who hatch—well, too, for those

[2] The sister-in-law of the Prince, now the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg.

did not require this letter to be assured, and whose sage counsel in all emergencies had never failed him. So, too, did the Queen's—one with him in this, as in all else. 'Oh, if you could be here now with us!' Her Majesty writes to Baron Stockmar (4th February). 'My darling stands so alone, and his grief is so great and touching. . . . He says (forgive my bad writing, but my tears blind me), *I* am now *all* to him. Oh, if I can be, I shall be only too happy, but I am so disturbed and affected myself, I fear I can be but of little use.'[1] To Baron Stockmar the Prince himself wrote:

'Dear Stockmar,—My heart impels me to give vent to my tears upon the bosom of a true and loving friend. I have sustained a terrible loss, and can as yet scarcely believe it. I fancy I still hear your prophetic words ringing in my ears, that my poor father would die suddenly. So it has proved. God will give us all strength to bear the blow becomingly. That we were separated gives it a peculiar poignancy. Not to see him, not to be present to close his eyes, not to help to comfort those he leaves behind, and to be comforted by them, is very hard. Here we sit together, poor Mama, Victoria, and myself, and weep, with a great cold public around us, insensible as stone. To have some true sympathetic friends at hand would be a great solace. Come to us in this time of trouble, if come you can.

'With him it is well. I share your belief that his would have been a dreary old age; and even were not my faith strong in the Providence which shapes all things for our good, I should find consolation in this. Still for us the

[1] 'I have been with the Queen,' writes Lady Lyttelton in a letter at this time, 'a good deal altogether. She is very affecting in her grief, which is in truth all on the Prince's account, and every time she looks at him her eyes fill afresh. He has suffered dreadfully, being very fond of his father; and his separation from him, and the suddenness of the event, and his having expected to see him soon, all contribute to make it worse.'

loss is terrible. The parent stem has been levelled by the storm, and the branches, which are scattered all over the world, must now strike separate roots for themselves. May Love, Friendship, Harmony keep them all together! For me the father's house is for ever closed; that house, it did me good to think, I might return to upon occasion. The sweet feeling that thought inspired I shall never know again. This reflection shakes me to the centre.

'This shall not weaken my love for my widowed native land. I will help Ernest with heart and hand in the difficult task to which he is called. Unfortunately, I am greatly hampered by being so far away. How much need has poor Grandmama of consolation, who has now lost her last friend! And poor desolate Mama! The good Alexandrine[2] seems to me in the whole picture like the consoling angel. Just such is Victoria to me, who feels and shares my grief, and is the treasure on which my whole existence rests. The relation in which we stand to one another leaves nothing to desire. It is a union of heart and soul, and is therefore noble, and in it the poor children shall find their cradle, so as to be able one day to ensure a like happiness for themselves.

'Outside there is still much to do, and I long greatly for your wise and faithful counsel.

'The world is assuredly not our true happiness; and, alas! every day's experience forces me to see how wicked men are. Every imaginable calumny is heaped upon us, especially upon me; and although a pure nature, conscious of its own high purposes, is and ought to be lifted above attacks, still it is painful to be misrepresented by people of whom one believed better things.

'ALBERT.'

'Windsor Castle, February 1, 1844.'

It would be well for those who hatch—well, too, for those

[2] The sister-in-law of the Prince, now the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg.

who propagate—calumnies, to lay the concluding words of this letter to heart. In the case of persons in the exalted position of the Prince, who must of necessity submit in silence to slander and misrepresentation, yet, having human hearts, must suffer acutely to find their conduct misrepresented and their purposes maligned, there is surely something peculiarly dastardly in the malice and uncharitableness that sap a reputation which, they must be well aware, neither the person assaulted, nor any one else can stoop to defend.

The Prince was indeed terribly shaken by his father's death. This was the first grief that had overshadowed the sunshine of his English home. It was the greatest that could befall him out of that home. Cherishing as he always had done with peculiar fondness the ties of domestic affection, and every remembrance and association of his youth, he felt, to use his own words, that with the loss he had now sustained a great piece had been taken out of his own life. The dreams of the past, and many a fair hope for the future, with which the thought of his father was linked, were now swept away by a sudden wrench. The records of his youth were closed, and a new era in his life had begun, an era of more concentrated purpose, and more self-dependent action. A few days later he was able to write to Baron Stockmar more calmly.

'Windsor Castle, February 9, 1844.

'Dear Stockmar,—We are all well, and getting familiarised by degrees with the thought that poor Papa is no more, which at first we should have thought next to impossible. I have regained my composure, and will set to work to fortify myself by constant activity, to which I have not been able to brace myself hitherto. A new epoch has commenced in my life, not indeed in action and aim, but in my emotional life (*Gefühlsleben*). My youth, with all the recollections linked

with it, has been buried with him around whom they centred.[3] From that world I am forcibly torn away, and my whole thoughts diverted to my life here and my own separate family. For these I will live wholly from this time forth, and be to it the father whose loss I mourn for myself. In the free fresh courage requisite for this, I have, however, been disturbed so long as my thoughts reverted anxiously and sadly to the dear ones left behind at my native home. I will, therefore, at once close accounts there, and set about putting the machine into a state in which it may go working on for the future. . . .

'These considerations have decided me to go over. Ten to twelve days are enough to despatch the whole business, and I esteem it a sacred duty to devote them to it. Victoria is of the same mind, and urges me to the step. At Easter Parliament rises for ten days, in which all the world leaves town, and these I have set apart for the purpose. I have requested Uncle Leopold to permit good Aunt Louise to give her companionship to poor Victoria during my absence; perhaps to come with her himself, and I doubt not he will comply with our wish.

'ALBERT.'

Nothing occurred to prevent the Prince from carrying out his intended visit during the Easter recess. The separation, brief as it was, involved extreme pain to the Queen, who had not, since their marriage, been one day apart from him. But conscious, that duty demanded his presence in Coburg, she would not allow her own feeling to interfere with the project. To him she well knew the separation was no less

[3] Within a few months of his own death, the Prince was deeply moved on receiving from his daughter, then the Crown Princess of Prussia, a daguerreotype of his Father. 'How precious,' he writes to her (3rd September, 1861), 'is the daguerreotype! After seventeen years, which have glided by since my dear father was taken away, all at once his shade has come before me—for such in fact it is. Tell Ernest, the sight of it has quite overpowered me.'

painful than to herself, and she therefore did her best to encourage him to make the journey.

The Queen of the Belgians arrived at Buckingham Palace on the 26th of March, and was followed by the King a few days afterwards. However greatly the Queen had striven to conceal the fact from the Prince, they were fully aware from Her Majesty's letters, how much the separation cost her, and they added to their already manifold claims on her affection, by coming to lighten by their society the heavy hours of solitude which she must otherwise have passed in the Prince's absence.

On the 28th of March he left England. The next day Lady Lyttelton writes from the Palace: 'The Queen has been behaving like a pattern wife, as she is, about the Prince's tour; so feeling, and so wretched, and yet so unselfish, encouraging him to go, and putting the best face upon it to the last moment. . . . We all feel sadly wicked and unnatural in his absence; and I am actually counting the days *de mon côté*, as Her Majesty is, *du sien*.'

From the Prince's letters to the Queen during his absence we are enabled to present the following extracts:—

'"Princess Alice," in Dover Harbour,
March 28, 1844.'

'My own darling (*Liebe gute Kleine*),—We got over our journey thus far rapidly and well, but the tide has been so unmannerly as to be an hour later than the calculated time, so that I cannot sail before three. Nevertheless, Smithett promises to deposit me at Ostend by half-past seven. I have been here about an hour, and regret the lost time which I might have spent with you. Poor child! you will, while I write, be getting ready for luncheon, and you will find a place vacant where I sat yesterday. In your heart, however, I hope my place will not be vacant. I at least have you on board with me in spirit.

'I reiterate my entreaty, "Bear up!" and do not give way to low spirits, but try to occupy yourself as much as possible. You are even now half a day nearer to seeing me again; by the time you get this letter you will be a whole one,—thirteen more, and I am again within your arms.

'The railroad is wonderful, especially that part of it between this and Folkestone. I have gone through part of the fortifications with some of the commanding officers, and am now writing in a handsome cabin on board the "Princess Alice." They are on the point of raising the anchor, which makes a hideous clatter.

'Our caravan is complete. Sydow also has met us. The sun shines brightly, and the sea looks quite calm. To-morrow Seymour will bring you further news of me.

'Your most devoted

'ALBERT.'

'. . . I cannot go to bed without writing two words more. I occupy your old room, and have just come from dinner, at which General D'Hane, Sir H. Seymour, Colonel de la Place, and the Burgomaster were present. We had a rather unpleasant passage. I kept my seat on one spot all the way with my eyes shut, but I was far from easy in my mind, and I arrived at half-past eight stiff with cold.

'It is now close on eleven, I am sleepy, and must therefore conclude. My prayers are with you. . . .

'Ostend, March 28, 1841.'

'Safe in Cologne, my first act is to assure you of the fact. The journey was accomplished in eleven hours from point to point, and was in every way propitious. Uncle Leopold joined us at Malines, and went with us as far as Verviers. He looks well, and hopes to be with you by Tuesday. The railroad from Liége to Aix-la-Chapelle is wonderfully beautiful. Everywhere I receive attention from the authorities.

Here in old Cologne, where I was so often in my student days, I cut a truly comical figure in my own eyes. I have put up at the Imperial Hotel. Your picture has been hung up everywhere, and been very prettily wreathed with laurel, so that you will look down from the walls upon my *tête-à-tête* with Bouverie' (the Prince's equerry).

'I have just heard that the snow will prevent my making the journey by way of Cassel. News exactly the reverse reach me from another source, at which you will be surprised; but I saw the chief post-office official, and have despatched Dehler with the *fourgon* to bespeak horses for me.'

'Cologne, March 29, 1844.'

'Six A.M. Just up. . . The day is fine, and about seven I shall cross the Rhine by the bridge of boats. Every step takes me farther from you—not a cheerful thought.'

'Cologne, March 30, 1844.'

'I arrived in Gotha safely about two hours since. Ernest came to meet me some miles out of town, and we alighted together at Grandmama's. Her delight is not to be described. It made me quite nervous for her. Alexandrine was there. Mama and Ernest Würtemberg came shortly after, and completed our dinner-party. I find Grandmama visibly altered; her deafness somewhat increased, but in all other respects the same true, warm, loving nature, by which she is so pre-eminently distinguished. Mama has grown much stouter, and at the same time looks older. She wears the black point and the long veil of a German widow. . . Your gifts have excited the greatest delight and admiration.

'Oh! how many varied emotions overwhelm me! remembrance, sorrow, joy, all these together produce a peculiar sadness. To-morrow I shall make the trying visit to the Palace. I shudder at the thought of it. Could you have

witnessed the happiness my return gave my family, you would have been amply repaid for the sacrifice of our separation. We spoke much of you. So many questions are put to me, that I am scarcely able to answer them.

'Now I am rather tired after my night journey and the exhausting incidents of the day, so I shall make haste to bed. Farewell, my darling, and fortify yourself with the thought of my speedy return. God's blessing rest upon you and the dear children!'

'Gotha, March 31, 1844.'

'P.S. I am rather tired with people who all want to come for only a moment. . . . Not to mortify them, I have had to consent to hold a levee at the Palace to-morrow. The ladies had all set their hearts upon coming as well, but upon this I put a negative. Yes! I receive many undoubted proofs of affection and attachment. I went to-day with Ernest and Ernest Würtemberg to Reinhardtsbrunn, a very mournful excursion. Papa was so fond of the place, it was his last creation. I enclose an auricula and a pansy, which I gathered for you at Reinhardtsbrunn. Here in the little garden there is absolutely nothing that I could bring away for you. . . .

'I purpose going to Coburg by way of Meiningen, and seeing the Duke *en passant*, so as to give him news of Queen Adelaide. Here I conclude my chronicle for the day, announcing that I have got toys for the children, and porcelain views for you, and that I have also procured whatever engravings and lithographs were to be had.'

'April 2, 1844.'

'How have I been delighted by your dear letter, which your courier brought me this morning: he shall be sent back to you this very evening. I was sure you would feel rather downcast and forlorn, still I was glad to see how well you

fought against it. I cannot be sufficiently grateful to dear kind Aunt for the excellent support she gives you. . . Your kind dear words have done me good, and you need never be afraid that you write too much or too long. . . I am very grateful to Peel for his letter. . . The courier is to start forthwith. I send you with the other things some Easter eggs of sugar.'

'Gotha, April 3, 1844.'

'I write to you to-day from the Kalenberg,[1] where we arrived safely yesterday evening about eight. This morning is again bright and glorious. Oh! how lovely and friendly is this dear old country, how glad I should be to have my little wife beside me, that I might share my pleasure with her! Ernest has arranged everything in really splendid style, and the greatest elegance pervades the place.

'Immediately after breakfast, I shall hurry into town, to visit many dear spots, and alas! to see also many people. About two we shall go to the St. Moritz Church, where the Passion Music of old Graun is to be given. How often have I heard it on Good Friday along with poor Papa!

'Our journey was a very rapid one. The parting was a severe trial to good Grandmama. She is so very kind and loving to me. I alighted for a moment at Oberhof, to take one other look at Papa's favourite shooting lodge. My reception in Meiningen was most cordial. . . Stockmar, who left Coburg yesterday, had been in Meiningen some hours before, but had travelled on without waiting for me. I hope he will be with you all the sooner. Here I stop to go to breakfast.

. .

'Kalenberg, April 5, 1844.'

'Before going to bed, let me add a word about to-day's doings. I started early for the town, where I saw a great

[1] A country seat of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, about three miles from Coburg.

many people. The Palace produced a terribly depressing effect upon me. . . Coburg has marvellously grown in beauty. About two we went with Mama, Alexandrine, and Ernest to the town church. The beautiful devotional singing of the congregation, as well as the admirable sermon of General-Superintendent Genzler, moved me to tears.[3] After Church we visited the Festung, and Papa's last beautiful creation there; and afterwards we rode to the Eckhardsberg, which our lost one had selected for his burial-place.

'Kalenberg, April 5, 1844.'

'P.S. I have this morning received your letter by the hands of Benda. He is to take his departure again forthwith, so as to be able (perhaps) to be with you a day sooner than myself. I can therefore spare time for only two words to say, that I am well; that I will start for England the day after to-morrow, and expect to reach Windsor by Thursday evening. I shall probably have a few minutes' conversation at Bamberg with the Crown Prince of Bavaria. Charles is to meet me at Mayence. I was at the Rosenau to-day, and send you the enclosed flowers from there. We dine here with Mama to-day. To-morrow I hold a levee, and then hurry back to you.

'Coburg, April 6, 1844.'

On the 11th the Prince returned to Windsor. How significant is the laconic entry in his Diary, which, as a rule, is a dry record in the fewest words of the main incidents of his days. 'Crossed on the 11th. I arrived at six o'clock in the evening at Windsor. *Great joy.*'

Before leaving England the Prince had prepared two

[3] General-Superintendent Genzler, the Court Chaplain, had officiated, and preached the Sermon, when the Prince and his Brother were confirmed, on the 12th of April, 1835 (see *Early Years*, Appendix B), a circumstance calculated to deepen the Prince's emotion on the present occasion.

agreeable surprises for the Queen upon her birthday. 'On the 5th of March,' Mr. Eastlake writes to a friend, 'the Prince asked me if I could paint a little picture of angels, such as I had introduced in the fresco.—and which, he added, the Queen admired much,—by the 24th of May (this is the day by which I am to do a picture for Her Majesty), as he wished to present it to the Queen on her birthday. I said I thought it was His Royal Highness's birthday. "No," he said, "that was in August." I promised to do the picture, and if I finish both, which I shall do if I live, the result will be curious. Each means a surprise to the other, and the same painter is selected.'

But a still more delightful surprise for the Queen was projected by the Prince in a miniature portrait of himself by Thorburn, taken in armour, to gratify a wish which had often been expressed by Her Majesty. Into this portrait the artist threw his highest power, and the result was a work fit to take rank with the masterpieces of the great Venetian School.[6] Its supreme artistic worth, however, lies in the fact that the painter has preserved not merely the lineaments, but the living spirit of the Prince's face,—having

> Divinely through all hindrance seen the man
> Behind it,

and, by fixing what was in truth but the expression of his habitual mood, has presented him at his 'best and greatest.' 'This portrait,' Her Majesty writes (20th December, 1873), 'gives the Prince's real expression more than anything she knows. During the fatal illness, and on the last morning of his life, he was wonderfully like this picture,'—a tribute beyond all other panegyric to the artist's skill.

[6] The head has been engraved as the frontispiece for this volume; but it need scarcely be said, that justice to so noble a work cannot be done without the whole picture being reproduced.

Lady Lyttelton, writing on the 24th of May (the Queen's birthday) from Claremont, where the Queen and Prince then were, says—

'The Prince has given the Queen a portrait of himself, by Thorburn, most beautiful indeed. Quite his gravest, manliest look, and done when he was rather tanned, as he was on his return, *in armour* (which is according to an old wish of the Queen's): the *painting* is quite magnificent, and so bold and free, that he says the lower part of the face was done in half an hour, and it is full of genius and admirably like. Then there is . . . . such a lovely group of angels painted for *to-day* by Eastlake, offering a medallion with *Heil und Segen* on it! All placed in a room turned into a bower by dint of enormous garlands.'

A few days later (30th May) the Queen and Prince were somewhat taken by surprise by the intelligence that the Emperor of Russia was on his way to visit the English Court, and might be daily looked for. The King of Saxony was already expected as a guest, and arrived at Buckingham Palace on the 1st of June. He was immediately followed by the Emperor, for whose reception Her Majesty had thus only forty-eight hours' notice to prepare. It was the Emperor's habit to make his visits in this sudden way; and in the present case it had been given out that he was not to come to England till the following year. Arriving overnight on the 1st of June, he went to Ashburnham House, the residence of the Russian Ambassador. Next day he was brought by Prince Albert to Buckingham Palace, and there received by the Queen. After dining at the Palace, the Emperor returned to Ashburnham House for the night, having determined not to occupy the apartments prepared for him at Buckingham Palace, until the return of the Court from Windsor Castle, to which it was to proceed next day. On the 3rd he was met at the Slough Station by the Prince, and conducted by him to the Castle. The Emperor was

greatly struck—as, indeed, who is not?—by the beauty and magnificence of that noblest of all royal residences; and his reception during the five days of his stay at the English Court impressed him with the conviction, which he repeatedly expressed, that it was conducted on the noblest scale of any Court he had seen. Everything, he said, appeared to be done without effort, and as if nothing more than ordinary were going on.

The Emperor had been in England before in November 1816, when Grand-Duke and only twenty years of age. Baron Stockmar met him upon that occasion at Claremont, where he visited the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold, and sketched him, as he sat at dinner between the Princess and the Duchess of York, in a few graphic lines:—

'He is an extraordinarily handsome, winning young fellow; taller than Leopold, without being thin, straight as a pine. His features are extremely regular, the forehead handsome and open, eyebrows firmly arched, nose peculiarly handsome, mouth small and well shaped, and chin firmly chiselled. . . His deportment is animated, free from constraint and stiffness, and yet very dignified. He speaks French fluently and well, accompanying what he says with gestures not unbecoming. If everything he said was not marked by ability, it was at any rate extremely pleasant, and he seems to have a decided talent for saying pretty things to women (*Cournuchen*). . . . There is an air of great self-reliance about him, but at the same time a manifest absence of pretension. . . .

'When the Countess Lieven played the piano after dinner, he kissed her hand, which struck the English ladies as extremely odd, but decidedly desirable. Mrs. Campbell (the Princess Charlotte's Bedchamber woman) could find no end of praise for him: "What an amiable creature! He is devilish handsome! He will be the handsomest man in Europe."'[7] (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 98).

[7] 'I was told,' adds Stockmar, 'that at bedtime a leathern sack was stuffed with hay from the stables by his people, and that on this he always slept. Our Englishmen pronounced this affectation.' Affectation or not, the Emperor

It is interesting to compare this portrait with the no less graphic sketch of the Emperor contained in the letters from the Queen hereafter to be quoted.

The object of the Emperor in visiting England was no doubt mainly political. It was an excellent thing, he said to the Queen, to see now and then with one's own eyes, as it did not do always to trust to diplomatists only. Such meetings begot a feeling of friendship and interest, and more could be done in a single conversation to explain one's feelings, views, and motives, than in a host of messages or letters. He avoided discussion on the position of affairs in Europe with the Queen, but he took frequent opportunities of going into them with the Premier and Lord Aberdeen, and also with Prince Albert, conversing at all times with the greatest apparent unreserve. In all his conversations he professed the utmost anxiety to win the confidence of the statesmen at the head of English affairs, and to convince them of the uprightness and strictly honourable character of his intentions. A phrase which, Baron Stockmar tells us (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 400), he addressed to nearly everyone with whom he came in contact, was:—'I know that I am taken for an actor; but indeed I am not; I am thoroughly straightforward; I say what I mean, and what I promise I fulfil:'—an assurance made, no doubt, in entire good faith, but so gratuitous, that in most cases it must have produced an effect the very opposite of that for which it was made.

At the same time, apart from any reasons of State policy, there can be no question that the Emperor was most desirous to conciliate the good opinion of the English by his presence and demeanour among them. 'Years ago,' he said in one of

adhered to the practice through life. The first thing his valets did, on being shown his bedroom at Windsor Castle, was to send to the stable for some trusses of clean straw, to stuff the Emperor's leathern case, which formed the mattress of the camp-bed, on which he always slept.

his interviews with Sir Robert Peel, 'Lord Durham was sent to me, a man full of prejudices against me. By merely coming to close quarters with me, all his prejudices were driven clean out of him. This is what I hope by coming here to bring about with you, and with England generally. By personal intercourse I trust to annihilate these prejudices. For I esteem England highly; but as to what the French say of me, I care not. I spit upon it.' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 399).

Beneath this affected indifference to France unquestionably lay an apprehension, which all the Emperor's efforts were unable to conceal. The growth of intimate relations between England and that country, which it had been the policy of both nations for many years to cultivate, and which seemed likely to be drawn closer and closer by the personal friendship of the Sovereigns, was manifestly viewed by him with jealous distrust, calculated as it was to affect most seriously any designs which might be entertained at St. Petersburg for enlarging Russian territory at the expense of Turkey. To detach England from this alliance would naturally be regarded by the Czar as a master-stroke of policy, and the recent conduct of France in the Eastern question may have seemed to furnish an opening for making the attempt. If, however, as currently believed at the time, one main object of his visit was to ascertain for himself whether this was possible, he must soon have been satisfied to the contrary by the very decided language with which Sir Robert Peel received his suggestions as to the probably selfish action of France, in the event of the affairs of Turkey coming to a crisis. The Emperor had already become possessed with the idea, which ultimately proved so fatal, that Turkey was in a moribund state, and must soon fall to pieces. 'I do not covet,' were his words to Sir Robert Peel, 'one inch of Turkish soil for myself, but neither will

I allow anybody else to have one.' It could only be at France that this remark was aimed, whose recent policy, in her support of Mehemet Ali, seemed to point at securing a footing for herself on Turkish territory. But it elicited no response from the English Premier beyond a general concurrence in the principle expressed, with the further remark, that England had only one thing to keep in view, which was, that there should be no government in Egypt too powerful to close the passage across that country to its commerce or its mails. As to France, Sir Robert Peel stated, it was and should continue to be one of the great objects of his policy to see that the French throne, upon the death of Louis Philippe, descended without convulsion to the next legitimate heir of the Orleans Dynasty. The same language was held by the Prince.[8]

While, therefore, there could be no mistake as to the sincerity of the English desire to maintain the *status quo* in Turkey, it was equally clear that it was the settled policy of the Government to enter into no arrangements which should prevent them from cultivating the French alliance with all zeal, in the interests, not of England merely, but of Europe. England had no selfish aims of her own to serve. She desired increase neither of territory, nor of influence; and she must decline to discuss what was to become of 'the sick man's' property, until dissolution actually took place,—and then only if events made such a discussion absolutely necessary,—or to pledge herself beforehand to accept any proposals which Russia might make upon the subject. If, therefore, the Emperor came over with the hope of securing the concurrence of the English Government in some scheme of preconcerted action to meet the event of any catastrophe

[8] The quiet courage and ability, which he showed upon this and all similar occasions, are spoken of with admiration by Her Majesty in her *Journal* of the visit.

occurring in Turkey, he signally failed. It is not improbable, however, that he deceived himself upon this subject, and was led by this self-deception into adopting the policy which some years after brought him into disastrous collision with the Western Powers.

On the Emperor the Prince produced a deep impression. He told Lord Aberdeen he should like to have him for his own son. In their personal communications he treated him with the greatest confidence, and paid him what in the Emperor's opinion was probably the highest testimony of his regard, by expressing a hope, that they might one day meet in the field of battle on the same side. The Prince was on the point of replying, that he trusted they might never see any interruption of the then peaceful state of Europe; but as this would have implied disapproval of the policy, which seemed to assume such an interruption as certain to take place, he checked himself, thinking the remark might be taken amiss.

This occurred after a brilliant review, which was given in honour of the Emperor and the King of Saxony in Windsor Park on the 6th of June, where the former was greatly struck by the rapidity of the Artillery movements, which surpassed anything he had previously seen. The only incidents at this review 'of any expression,' writes Lady Lyttelton, 'were the very fine cheer on the old Duke of Wellington passing the Queen's carriage, and the really beautiful salute of Prince Albert, who rode by at the head of his Regiment, and of course lowered his sword in full military form to the Queen, with *such* a look and smile as he did it! I never saw so many pretty feelings expressed in a minute.'

After being present at Ascot races on the 4th and 6th, the Royal party returned to town on the 7th. Next day the Emperor went with Prince Albert to a breakfast at Chis-

wick, and afterwards with the Queen and Prince to the Opera. On the 9th he took his leave, Prince Albert accompanying him as far as Woolwich.

On the 4th of June, the day after the Emperor's arrival at Windsor Castle, the Queen, in announcing his visit, writes to King Leopold:—

'A great event and a great compliment his visit certainly is, and the people here are extremely flattered at it. He is certainly a very striking man; still very handsome; his profile is beautiful, and his manners most dignified and graceful; extremely civil, quite alarmingly so, as he is so full of attentions and *politesses*. But the expression of the eyes is severe, and unlike anything I ever saw before.[9] He gives Albert and myself the impression of a man, who is not happy, and on whom the burden of his immense power and position weighs heavily and painfully. He seldom smiles, and when he does, the expression is not a happy one. He is very easy to get on with. . .

'Both the Emperor and the King (of Saxony) are quite enchanted with Windsor. The Emperor said very *poliment*, "*C'est digne de vous, Madame!*". . . The Emperor praised my Albert very much, saying, "*Il est impossible de voir un plus joli garçon; il a l'air si noble et si bon. . .*" He amused the King (of Saxony) and me by saying he was so "*embarrassé*" when people were presented to him, and that he felt so "*gauche en frac*," which certainly he is quite unaccustomed

[9] This is explained by what Lady Lyttelton says in one of her letters: 'The only fault in his face is, that he has pale eyelashes, and his enormous and very brilliant eyes have no shade; besides which, they have the awful look given by occasional glimpses of white above the eyeball, which comes from his father Paul, I suppose, and gives a savage wildness for a moment, pretty often.' In another letter she says: 'The expression of his face, especially when he sits near Prince Albert, is too autocratic, and has an awkward character of very deep gravity, almost sadness, and a strange and almost constant want of smiles.'

to wear. Military uniform had become so habitual to him, that without it he said he felt "*comme si l'on m'ôtait la peau.*"'

On the 11th of June the Queen continues her report of the incidents of the visit, and of the impression produced by the Czar:—

'The Review on the 5th was really very interesting, and our reception, as well as that of the Emperor, most enthusiastic. . . .' ['The Emperor asked my leave,' the Queen writes in her *Journal*, 'to ride down the line. When he came back, he thanked me warmly for having allowed him to see his *anciens camarades*.'] 'Our children were there and charmed. On the 6th we went with the Emperor and King to the Races, and I never saw such a crowd. Again here the reception was most brilliant. Every evening a large dinner in the Waterloo Room and the two last evenings in uniform, as the Emperor disliked so being *en frac*, and was quite embarrassed in it. On the 7th we took him and the King back here, and in the evening had a party of about 260. . . .' [On his return from the *fête* at Chiswick on the morning of the 8th, the Emperor talked of it at dinner with delight,—how brilliant it had been, and of the great numbers of beautiful women present. He had seen Lord Melbourne there, and the Queen writes, 'When I spoke of Lord Melbourne, and of the respect he entertained for the Emperor, His Majesty replied by expressing that he felt a great esteem for Lord Melbourne, adding, "All who serve Your Majesty well are dear to me."' As he led Her Majesty from table to the Drawing Room, he said, '"*C'est malheureusement la dernière soirée, où je jouis des bontés de Votre Majesté; mais le souvenir en sera éternellement gravé sur mon cœur. Je ne vous reverrai probablement pas*," to which I replied, he could easily come here again. "*Vous savez comme c'est difficile pour nous de faire de telles*

choses; mais je vous recommande mes enfants." He said this sadly.']

'In the evening of the 8th,' Her Majesty continues in her letter to King Leopold, 'we went to the Opera (not in state), but they recognised us and we were most brilliantly received. I had to force the Emperor forward, as he never would come forward when I was there, and I was obliged to take him by the hand, and make him appear. It was impossible to be more respectful than he was towards me. On Sunday afternoon he left us (Albert accompanied him to Woolwich). He was much affected at going, and really and unaffectedly touched at his reception and stay,—the simplicity and quietness of which told upon his love of domestic life, which is very great.'

'On the morning he was to leave,' Her Majesty records in her *Journal*, 'he expressed his gratitude to us in very warm terms, and said, "*Je pars avec les sentiments du plus profond dévouement à Votre Majesté, et à celui*" (taking Albert's hand) "*qui a été comme un frère pour moi.*"'

'At a little before five,' Her Majesty's *Journal* continues, 'we went down to wait in the Small Drawing Room with the children. Not long after the Emperor came in, and spoke to them; and then with a sigh and with much emotion, which took all the harshness of his countenance away, he said, "*Je pars d'ici, Madame, le cœur gros; et pénétré de vos bontés pour moi. Vous pouvez être sûre, Madame, de pouvoir compter sur moi en tous temps comme votre plus dévoué serviteur. Que Dieu vous bénisse!*" and again he kissed my hand and pressed it, and I kissed him. He kissed the children most affectionately, saying, "*Que Dieu les bénisse pour votre bonheur.*" He wanted me not to go farther, saying, "*Je vous en supplie! N'allez pas plus loin. Je tomberai à vos genoux: laissez moi la conduire chez elle.*" But of course I would not consent, and took his

arm to go to the Hall. . . . At the top of the few steps leading to the lower Hall, he again took most kindly leave, and his voice betrayed his emotion; he kissed my hand, and we embraced. When I saw him at the door, I went down the steps, and from the carriage he begged I would not stand there; but I did, and saw him drive off with Albert for Woolwich.'

To return again to Her Majesty's letter of the 11th to King Leopold:—

'I will now (having told all that has passed) give you my opinions and feelings on the subject, which I may say are Albert's also. I was extremely against the visit, fearing the *gêne* and bustle, and even at first I did not feel at all to like it; but by living in the same house together quietly and unrestrainedly (and this Albert, and with great truth, says, is the great advantage of these visits, that I not only *see* these great people, but *know* them), I got to know the Emperor and he to know me. There is much about him which I cannot help liking, and I think his character is one which should be understood, and looked upon for once as it is. He is stern and severe, with strict principles of *duty* which nothing on earth will make him change. Very clever I do not think him, and his mind is not a cultivated one. His education has been neglected. Politics and military concerns are the only things he takes great interest in; the arts and all softer occupations he does not care for; but he is sincere, I am certain—sincere even in his most despotic acts—from a sense that it is the only way to govern. He is not, I am sure, aware of the dreadful cases of individual misery which he so often causes; for I can see, by various instances, that he is kept in utter ignorance of many things which his people carry out in most corrupt ways, while he thinks he is extremely just. He thinks of general measures, but does not look into details; and I am sure much never reaches his ears, and, as you observe, how can it?

'He asked for nothing whatever—has merely expressed his great anxiety to be on the best terms with us, but not to the exclusion of others—only let things remain as they are. He is very much alarmed about the East, and about Austria. . . . He is, I should say, too frank, for he talks so openly before people, which he should not do, and with difficulty restrains himself.[10] His anxiety to be believed is *very great*, and I must say his personal promises I *am* inclined to believe. Then his feelings are very strong. He feels kindness deeply,—and his love for his wife and children, and for all children, is very great. He has a strong feeling for domestic life, saying to me, when our children were in the room, "*Voilà les doux moments de notre vie!*" One can see by the way he takes them up and plays with them, that he is very fond of children.'

Elsewhere Her Majesty records, 'He spoke very reasonably of the relations between children and parents, saying that they should be brought up with the greatest possible respect for their parents, but with the greatest confidence in them, and no fear. They themselves, he said, had been brought up with terrible strictness, and had lived in continual fear of their mother. He also spoke of Princes being nowadays obliged to strive to make themselves worthy of their position, so as to reconcile people to the fact of their being Princes.'[11]

[10] Baron Stockmar mentions (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 397) that on the occasion of the Emperor's conversation with Sir Robert Peel the windows were open. The Emperor spoke so loud that the persons outside could hear all he said, and the Premier was obliged to ask His Majesty to withdraw to the end of the room.

[11] This opinion, which the sense of his own responsibility must have brought closely home to the Emperor, but which takes one at first somewhat by surprise as coming from his lips, must have found a deep response in the heart of the Prince. It expressed his own conviction, and was acted upon throughout his life. It was well said in 1852 by an acute German observer, 'Prince Albert is one of the few Royal personages who can sacrifice to a principle, once they see it to be good and noble, all that others are impelled to cling to either by narrow-mindedness, or by the inborn prejudices of their rank. He knows that if Princes exist, it is for the good of the people, not because the people are the hereditary property of the Princes. Well for him he does so.'

'He was not only civil,' the Queen continues in the letter already cited, 'but extremely kind to us both, and spoke in the highest praise of dearest Albert to Sir Robert Peel, saying he wished any prince in Germany had as much ability and sense.

'He is not happy, and that melancholy which is visible in the countenance made us sad at times.' ['I don't know why,' says Her Majesty's *Journal*, 'but I can't help pitying him; I think his immense power weighs heavily on his head.'] 'The sternness of the eyes goes very much off when you know him, and changes according to his being put out (and he can be much embarrassed) or not, and also from his being heated, as he suffers from congestion in the head. He never takes a drop of wine, and eats extremely little. Albert thinks he is a man inclined to give way too much to impulse and feeling, which makes him act wrongly often. His admiration for beauty is very great. . . . But he remains very faithful to those he admired twenty-eight years ago. . . .'

The effect of this visit unquestionably was to make the Emperor personally popular in England. It was impossible to resist the attraction of his fine person, his admirable address, and distinguished courtesy of bearing. Baron Stockmar somewhat cynically sums up the reasons for this favourable impression thus:—

'He is still a great devotee to female beauty. To all his old English flames he showed the greatest attention. This, together with his commanding figure and prevailing courtesy to the fair sex, certainly won over the majority of the ladies with whom he came in contact. The men praised the dignity, the tact, and the punctuality which distinguished him in social intercourse. He made friends of the racing men at Ascot by founding a racing prize of 500*l.* a year, and gratified the Court officers on his departure by numberless snuff-boxes and handsome presents. (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 400.)

The warmth of the Emperor's reception in England was not calculated to allay the jealousy with which his visit was regarded by a section of the political parties in France, who immediately surmised that it must be connected with some secret arrangements to the prejudice of French interests. It was quite possible that this jealousy, loudly echoed as it was in the Parisian journals, might have had the effect of interfering with the project of a visit to England which had been warmly entertained by King Louis Philippe ever since the visit of the Queen and Prince to the Château d'Eu. It is to this that Her Majesty alludes in the following passage of the letter just quoted :—

'I hope that you will persuade the King (Louis Philippe) to come all the same in September. Our motives and politics are, *not* to be exclusive, but to be on good terms with all—and why should we not? We make no secret of it.

'The good King of Saxony remains another week with us. He is so unassuming. He is out sight-seeing all day, and enchanted with everything.'

On the 19th of June the king left England. This most amiable and accomplished Sovereign had lost no opportunity of seeing everything which London had to offer of interest or significance. He went away delighted with his visit, and left behind him with his hosts the most agreeable impression of the sweetness of his character, and of a mind singularly open, intelligent, and unaffected.[12]

[12] The King of Saxony was thrown from his carriage and killed, in August, 1854.

CHAPTER XII.

Before the excitement of the Imperial visit had passed away, the Queen and Prince were thrown into a state of great anxiety by a grave ministerial crisis. Nothing could have been more satisfactory than the progress of events since the accession of Sir Robert Peel to power. Abroad success had attended our arms; our relations with America were placed on a satisfactory footing, although soon afterwards to be again disturbed by the question of the Oregon Territory; but, above all, the internal prosperity of the country had revived, and, instead of a succession of alarming deficits, the revenue had increased far beyond the estimates. In the year ending 5th April, 1844, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to show a surplus of no less than 4,165,000*l.*, which, after clearing off the heavy deficiency of the previous year, left a net balance of 1,400,000*l.* at his disposal. But the financial policy of Sir Robert Peel, to which this satisfactory result was due, based as it was upon a gradual abolition of protective duties, had been unwelcome, as we have already indicated, to many of the adherents of the Government, and they had from time to time by their votes shown a disposition to embarrass the action of their leader.

On the 14th of June the Government found themselves in a minority of 20, on an Amendment to the Resolutions proposed by them upon the Sugar Duties. This was brought about by the defection of a considerable number of their ordinary supporters, some of whom voted in defence of the

West India interest, which they conscientiously believed would be injured by the ministerial measure, while others had merely seized the opportunity to testify their general dissatisfaction with a Minister, who, they saw, was determined to act upon his own convictions, without respect to the laggards of his party. Staggered by the dissatisfaction thus shown, Sir Robert Peel, and with him the leading members of his Government, were disposed to resign at once, rather than expose themselves to the chance of being compelled to do so at a later stage by a continuance of similar acts of disaffection. Without the full support and confidence of his party in the details of his administration, Sir Robert Peel felt that his position would become intolerable. The Opposition, it is true, on a vote of confidence would unquestionably have been in a minority of 100, but they might by similar defections of his own party at any time renew his embarrassment. He had no reason to doubt, that the principles on which he was acting were those which the country had sent a majority of its representatives to support; but, if this support were to be denied, the Government could not be carried on. The necessity for the decisive step of resignation, however, was happily obviated by the action of his own party. A large meeting of Conservatives, held on the morning of the 18th, assured the Government of the general and united support of the party, and a vote the same evening in Committee, reversing the decision of the 14th, and come to after a distinct intimation from the Premier, that it would decide the fate of the Government, averted for a time a change which at this period would have been most undesirable.

About the same time a fresh source of anxiety sprang up in a question comparatively trivial in itself, but which threatened to break up the French alliance. The convention which had been extorted in September, 1842, by Admiral Du Petit Thouars from our old ally, Queen Pomare, and under

which the French had assumed possession of the Island of Tahiti, had on its becoming known brought matters to a critical issue between the countries. It was only by the moderation of the respective Governments that a rupture was averted. The French Government disavowed the right of dominion over Otaheite, which had been asserted in their name, and professed themselves satisfied with the more modest claim to a Protectorate merely. This concession, avowedly made in deference to English remonstrance, was seized by the French Liberals as the occasion for a series of most vehement attacks upon the government of M. Guizot. So high did the spirit of hostility run to a Minister who was accused of 'putting France at the feet of England,' that the paragraph in the Address approving of the concessions was carried in the Chamber of Deputies by a majority of only 8, on a division of 205.

This cause of ill-feeling between the countries had scarcely been removed (January 1844), when the respective Governments found themselves once more embroiled by the indiscretion of the French officials in Tahiti. The French had made themselves most unpopular in the island, and on the night of the 2nd of March one of their sentinels was disarmed by the natives. This was made the pretext for seizing and imprisoning 'in reprisal' Mr. Pritchard, who, besides being the British Consul, was an active and influential Protestant missionary, long resident in the island, and therefore peculiarly obnoxious to the French Roman Catholic missionaries. He was released only on condition of instantly leaving the Pacific, which he had to do without even seeing his family, and to find his way to London by way of Valparaiso. The outrage thus done to England in the person of its Consul created profound indignation, which burst into a flame the more readily because of the still smouldering irritation occasioned by the seizure of the island. Sir Robert

Peel, carried away by the general feeling, denounced it in Parliament in language not calculated to smooth the difficulty. 'I do not hesitate,' he said, 'to declare that a gross insult, accompanied with a gross indignity, has been committed. The insult was committed by a person clothed with a temporary authority, and, so far as we can discover, by the direction of the French Government.' (*Parl. Deb.* July 31, 1844.)

Happily the Sovereigns and Ministers of both countries were too deeply impressed with the importance of peace to suffer themselves to be led into hostilities either by the imprudence of their officials in Tahiti, or by the heated temper of their countrymen at home. But it was only after months of negotiation and anxiety that Sir Robert Peel was able to announce to Parliament on the 5th of September, that the questions in dispute had been arranged amicably by satisfactory explanations and the concession of a moderate indemnity to Mr. Pritchard.

In the midst of these anxieties the Queen and Prince were made happy by the birth of a second son at Windsor Castle on the 6th of August.[1] How serious these anxieties had been and still were is apparent from an expression in Her Majesty's first letter to King Leopold after her confinement. 'The only thing almost to mar our happiness is the heavy and threatening cloud which hangs over our relations with France, and which, I assure you, distresses and alarms us sadly. The whole nation here are very angry. . . God grant all may

[1] A few days before (31st July) the Prince's favourite greyhound Eos was found dead. She had to all appearance been quite well an hour before. 'I am sure,' the Prince writes next day to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, 'you will share my sorrow at this loss. She was a singularly clever creature, and had been for eleven years faithfully devoted to me. How many recollections are linked with her! She was my companion from my fourteenth to my twenty-fifth year, a symbol, therefore, of the best and fairest section of my life.' The exquisite proportions of this beautiful animal are familiar to all lovers of art in more than one of Sir E. Landseer's pictures.

come right, and I am still of good cheer, but the French keep us constantly in hot water.' A few days later (27th August), Her Majesty again writes to her Uncle, 'The impending political cloud, I hope, looks less black and louring. But I think it very unwise in Guizot not to have at once disavowed d'Aubigny for what you yourself call an "outrage," instead of allowing it to drag on for four weeks, and letting our people get excited.' And when all had been peaceably arranged, Her Majesty's words, in writing (14th September, 1844) to Brussels, are full of significance. 'The good ending of our difficulties with France is an immense blessing; but it is really and truly necessary that you and those in Paris should know that the danger was *imminent*. . . . We must try and prevent these difficulties for the future.'

It is impossible to look back upon the history of the relations of England and France from the commencement of the present reign without seeing of what infinite importance to the good understanding between the two countries was the footing upon which Her Majesty stood, by reason both of the ties of relationship and of personal regard, with the King of the French and his son-in-law King Leopold. The influence of the latter upon King Louis Philippe was at all times available for peaceful counsels. He knew England and the ways of its people well, and could speak with authority, when the remonstrances of this country through the usual official channels might not always have commanded a hearing. At the same time his position of perfect neutrality, as the Sovereign of a kingdom whose independence was guaranteed by both the Powers, justified him in throwing in the weight of his opinion into the scale upon any critical emergency. It has already been intimated (*supra*, p. 82), that his judicious intervention was not without its effect in modifying the opinions of King Louis Philippe, and leading to the abandonment of the warlike attitude which had been assumed by his

Government in regard to the Eastern Question. No stimulus from without was wanted to make him use whatever influence he possessed for this purpose. But it may reasonably be assumed, that a private communication from Lord Melbourne at a critical moment gave additional weight to his views. In a memorandum of a conversation on the Tahiti question with Lord Melbourne on the 19th August, 1844, when war in his Lordship's opinion was inevitable, Mr. Anson states :—

'In 1840 the French Cabinet talked of a large increase of the army, which would have endangered the peace of Europe. Parliament was not sitting at the moment in England, but Lord Melbourne, who was then Prime Minister, wrote to King Leopold, in order that it might reach the ear of Louis Philippe, to say that, if the proposed increase took place, he would immediately summon Parliament, and take a vote for forty additional sail of the line, which would very shortly sweep everything hostile from the face of the seas. He considers the proposed increase was effectually stopped by the knowledge of this intention.' [2]

Important as the counsels of the King of the Belgians were in that case, they were still more important in bringing about a peaceful solution of the Pritchard-Tahiti difficulty.

A royal visit to Ireland this autumn had been in contem-

[2] Between this time and the discussion on the annexation of Tahiti, Louis Philippe's views had taken a very decided shape as to the criminal folly of a war with England, which was talked of so glibly, and with so 'light a heart,' by journalists, and even by ministers of state. In a letter to King Leopold from Neuilly, 1844, the following striking passage occurs,—'Les dépêches de Guizot sur Tahiti, et ses tristes bêtises, doivent avoir été communiquées à Lord Aberdeen. . . . Je n'ai pas de patience pour la manière dont on magnifie si souvent des bagatelles de misère en *casus belli*. Ah! malheureux que vous êtes! Si vous saviez comme moi ce que c'est que *bellum*, vous vous garderiez bien d'étendre, comme vous le faites, le triste catalogue des *casus belli* que vous ne trouvez jamais assez nombreux pour satisfaire les passions populaires, et votre soif de popularité.' *Revue Rétrospective*, pp. 379–80. King Louis Philippe personally had never but one opinion as to the whole Tahiti affair; and in speaking of it to Her Majesty during his visit here his words were: '*Je la voudrais au fond de la mer.*'

plation; but was reluctantly postponed in consequence of the state of the country, which had not yet recovered from the excitement of the trial of O'Connell and his supporters.[3] It was therefore determined again to visit the Highlands. Blair Castle had been placed by Lord Glenlyon (afterwards Duke of Athole) at Her Majesty's disposal; and thither, on the 9th of September the Queen and the Prince, together with the Princess Royal, proceeded by sea, from Woolwich to Dundee, and thence by road, arriving at Blair Castle on the 11th.

But before leaving Windsor the Queen and Prince were to receive yet another Royal guest, with whom they were some years afterwards to be connected by an intimate tie, which at this time could scarcely have been contemplated. This was the Prince of Prussia, now the Emperor of Germany, who arrived at Windsor on the 31st of August. 'I like him very much,' Her Majesty writes the same day. 'He is extremely amiable, agreeable, and sensible; cheerful, and easy to get on with.' A later entry records: 'He is very amusing, sensible and frank. On all public questions he spoke most freely, mildly, and judiciously, and I think would make a steadier and safer king than the present. He was in ecstasy with the Park and the trees, as he is with everything in England.' According to Bunsen (*Life*, vol. ii. p. 70), who, as Prussian Ambassador here, was much with him, he took an 'affection for England—admired her greatness, which he perceives to be a consequence of her political and religious institutions.' The cry throughout Europe at this time was for Constitutional government upon the English model, but the Prince seems to have felt that a Constitution like ours, which had grown

[3] On the 4th of September the House of Lords gave judgment, reversing, by a majority, the decision of the Judges in the Court below, on the writ of error, in the case of O'Connell and Others *v.* The Queen. O'Connell and the other prisoners were immediately released, and on the 7th they passed through Dublin in procession. It was called triumphal, but those who saw it could not fail to be struck with the hollow-hearted aspect of the proceedings.

up with the growth of the nation, and owed its form as well as its stability to the fact that it was in harmony with the national culture and life and habits, was not a thing to be applied to the other nations of Europe, where none of the conditions were the same.

A very cordial and intimate relation was established between Prince Albert and the Prince of Prussia during this visit. Frank and sincere as both were by nature, and both watching with anxious interest the aspect of affairs on the Continent, which was already prophetic of coming storms, this was only to be expected. The friendship was cemented by personal intercourse during four subsequent visits of the Prince of Prussia to England in 1848, 1851, 1853, and 1856, and came to a happy climax in the marriage by which the reigning families of Prussia and England became united in 1858. On the 4th of September the Prince of Prussia left Windsor Castle; but before leaving England, he was present at the interesting family ceremony of the Christening of the second son of the House. This was performed, on the 6th of September, in the Private Chapel at Windsor Castle, when the infant Prince was baptized by the names of Alfred Ernest Albert; the Sponsors on the occasion being Prince George of Cambridge represented by his father the Duke of Cambridge, the Prince of Leiningen represented by the Duke of Wellington, and H.R.H. the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha represented by H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent. The scene in the Chapel, Her Majesty's *Journal* records, 'was very solemn, and the organ has always a moving effect on me. To see these two children there too' (the Crown Princess and the Prince of Wales) 'seemed such a dream to me. . . . May God bless them all, poor little things! And that our youngest really may be as good as his beloved father, was my fervent prayer during the service, as always, for all of them.'

After the exciting events of the last few months, the

change to the bracing air and simple life of the Highlands was no less welcome than necessary to both the Queen and Prince. 'The place,' Her Majesty writes (28th September) to King Leopold, 'possesses every attraction you can desire, shooting, fishing, beautiful scenery, great liberty and retirement, and delicious air.'

Freed from the shackles of Court life, and face to face with Nature in her fairest aspects and among her deepest solitudes, the charm of their simple and secluded mountain life became so great, that it cost the Queen and Prince a pang to part from it, which was only lightened by the hope of returning to the Highlands at no distant day. Important engagements meanwhile demanded their presence at Windsor early in October. A few days before leaving Blair Castle, the Prince writes to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg:—

'Blair Castle, September 22, 1844.

'. . . We are all well, and live a somewhat primitive, yet romantic, mountain life, that acts as a tonic to the nerves, and gladdens the heart of a lover like myself of field sports and of Nature. Pussy's cheeks are on the point of bursting, they have grown so red and plump; she is learning Gaelic, but makes wild work with the names of the mountains.

'We leave on the 1st, and expect by 6 p.m. of the 3rd to reach Windsor, where, after a preliminary training on the sea, the bold deer-stalking mountaineer will have to transform himself into a courtier, to receive and *fêter* a King of the French, and play the part of a staid and astute diplomatist.'

Leaving Blair Castle on the 1st of October, the Court returned to Windsor Castle on the 3rd. The satisfactory adjustment of the Tahiti affair had removed the only serious impediment to the cherished wish of King Louis Philippe to visit the Queen and Prince at Windsor Castle, where every

arrangement was made to give him a brilliant and cordial reception. A loud outcry against the visit had been raised by a section of the French press, but the King and M. Guizot were determined to prove by their presence in England the sincerity of their friendly feelings towards that country. On the 8th the King landed at Portsmouth. 'My dearest master,' the Queen writes on the morning of that day to King Leopold, 'is gone to Portsmouth to receive him. The excitement and curiosity to see the King, and the desire to give him a most hearty reception, are very great indeed.' His words on landing, in answer to the Address of the Corporation of Southampton, produced a most favourable impression:—

'I have not forgotten,' he said, 'the many kindnesses I have received from your countrymen during my residence among you many years since. At that period I was frequently pained at the existence of differences and feuds between our countries. I assure you, gentlemen, I shall endeavour at all times to prevent a repetition of those feelings and conduct, believing as I do most sincerely, that the happiness and prosperity of a nation depend quite as much on the peace of those nations by which she is surrounded as on quiet within her own dominions.'

The Duke of Wellington went with the Prince to receive the King on his arrival, and accompanied them to Windsor Castle. The scene of their arrival there is described by the Dowager Lady Lyttelton with her accustomed clearness and vigour of touch:—

'Windsor Castle, October 8, 1844.

'Dearest mine daughter (as the Prince of Wales would say), —As this is a historical day, I think I will not be lazy, but just write you word of an event while it is fresh. At two o'clock he arrived, this curious King; worth seeing if ever a body was! The Queen having graciously permitted me to be present, I joined the Court in the corridor, and we waited an hour, and then the Queen of England came out of her room, to go and

receive the King of France; the first time in history! Her Majesty had not long to wait (in the Armoury, as she received him in the state apartments, his own private rooms; very civil). And from the Armoury, amidst all the old trophies, and knights' armour, and Nelson's bust, and Marlborough's flag, and Wellington's, we saw the first of the escort enter the Quadrangle, and down flew the Queen, and we after her, to the outside of the door on the pavement of the Quadrangle, just in time to see the escort clattering up, and the carriage close behind. The old man was much moved, I think, and his hand rather shook as he alighted; his hat quite off, and grey hair seen. His countenance is striking, much better than the portraits, and his embrace of the Queen was very parental and nice. Montpensier is a handsome youth, and the courtiers and ministers very well-looking, grave, gentleman-like people. It was a striking piece of *real* history—made one feel and think much.'

The Queen's *Journal* enables us to present further details:

'The King embraced me most warmly and kindly, and said, "*Combien de plaisir j'ai de vous embrasser!*" He seemed quite touched, and led me upstairs. What numbers of emotions and thoughts must fill his breast on coming here! He is the first King of France who comes on a visit to the Sovereign of this country. A very eventful epoch indeed, and one which will surely bring good fruits. The King said, as he went up the grand staircase towards his apartments, "*Dieu! comme c'est beau!*" . . . At a little before three the King and Montpensier came over to the White Rooms and lunched with us and Mama,—the King sitting just where the Emperor of Russia used to sit. He was in the highest spirits, repeating again and again how happy he was to be here again, and full of recollections of what had happened during his stay in England. He had met with a very enthusiastic reception. . . .

'I never saw anybody more pleased, or more amused in looking at every picture and every bust. He knew every bust and everything about everybody here in a most wonder-

ful way. Such a memory, such activity! It is a pleasure to show him anything, as he is so pleased and interested. He is enchanted with the Castle, and repeated to me again and again (as did also all his people) how delighted he was to be here, how he had feared that what he had so earnestly wished since I came to the throne would not take place; and "*Dieu! comme cela m'a fait plaisir de vous donner le bras!*"'

At dinner 'the King talked much of England—of having lived here so long, and liked it so much,—his being so *dévoué* to us, . . . of our late difficulties, which he felt most grateful for our having helped so much to smooth . . . I wish I could put down his conversations, they are so able and amusing. . . . It is to-day a week since we left Blair; what a different day! Albert said, how many suites we had seen here! The King of Prussia's, the Archduke's, the Emperor of Russia's, the King of Saxony's, and now the King of the French's. . . .'

'Wednesday, October 9.

'After breakfast we went over to the King with Pussette, and sat with him some little while. . . . He is an extraordinary man. . . . He talked much of our last difficulties, and the English nation having been so excited. He said the French nation did not wish for war, "*mais ils aiment à claquer comme les postillons*," without knowing the bad consequences. Then he said the French did not understand being *négociants* like the English, nor the necessity of "*la bonne foi*," which gave this country such stability. "*La France ne peut pas faire la guerre à l'Angleterre, qui est le Triton des mers; l'Angleterre a le plus grand empire du monde.*" . . . Then the King talked of this Tahiti affair, "*que je voudrais au fond de la mer*," and which he would much wish to be quite rid of. They only

wanted it for their whalers, which he trusted the Marquesas would do for, and he hoped to get rid of it altogether. . . .'

The next day was spent in a drive to the scenes with which the King had been familiar when formerly in England. 'We proceeded by Staines,' the same record continues, 'where the King recognised the inn, and everything, to Twickenham, where we drove up to the house where he used to live, and where Lord and Lady Mornington, who received us, are now living. It is a very pretty house, much embellished since the King lived there, but otherwise much the same, and he seemed greatly pleased to see it again. He walked round the garden, in spite of the heavy shower which had just fallen. . . . The King himself directed the postilion which way to go, to pass by the house where he lived for five years with his poor brothers before his marriage. From here we drove to Hampton Court, where we walked over Wolsey's Hall, and all the rooms. The King remained a long time in them, looking at all the pictures, and marking on the catalogue numbers of those which he intended to have copied for Versailles. We then drove to Claremont. Here we got out and lunched, and after luncheon took a hurried walk in the grounds. . . . We left Claremont after four, and reached Windsor at a little before six. The evening was cold and fine, and wherever the King was seen he was enthusiastically received, far more heartily and affectionately than the Emperor of Russia, many crying "*Vive le Roi*," "Long live Louis Philippe!" At Chertsey a man made the King a French speech, crying, "*Votre Majesté est dans un pays où l'on sait vous apprécier, et je suis bien aise de vous le témoigner.*" There was a great crowd here, and, in coming home, near the gates; and the King (who has a friendly way of bowing very low with his hat, and stretching out his hands) said, "*Je n'ai jamais eu une réception pareille; combien cela me touche!*" . . . The King was greatly

pleased with the country as he passed, and the neatness and cleanliness, and always called out to Montpensier to observe it. "*Quel beau pays! Je suis bien heureux de le voir encore une fois.*"'

At dinner 'the King repeated to me how thankful he was for to-day's drive, which had given him so much pleasure. He talked to me of the time when he was "*dans une école dans les Grisons, un 'Lehrer' seulement,*" receiving 20 pence a day, having to brush his own boots, &c., under the name of Chabot! What an eventful life has his been! . . . .'

The next day (9th September) the King was invested by Her Majesty with the Order of the Garter—a ceremony which must have been pregnant with suggestions to all present, who remembered that the Order had been instituted by Edward III. after the Battle of Cressy, and that its earliest Knights were the Black Prince and his companions, whose prowess had been so fatal to France. The King was introduced to the Garter Room by Prince Albert and the Duke of Cambridge. 'When he approached,' Her Majesty's *Journal* records, 'we all rose, and the King bowed in due form as he came up. I turned to him and said, "I have the pleasure of announcing to Your Majesty that you are elected a Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter." Albert then placed the Garter round the King's leg. I pulled it through while the Admonition was being read, and the King said to me, "*Je voudrais baiser cette main,*" which he did afterwards, and I embraced him. The Duke of Cambridge assisted me in placing the riband over the King's shoulder; after which I embraced him again, and he embraced Albert. The King then walked round the table, shaking hands with each of the Knights, after which they were called over, and we accompanied the King to his rooms, where he again and again thanked us for our kindness, which I see with real satisfac-

tion pleases him so very much. At 4 o'clock we again went over to the King's Room, and I placed at his feet a large Cup representing St. George and the Dragon, with which he was very much pleased. . . . Afterwards we drove round Virginia Water, and the King said often, "*Il n'y a rien de plus beau que Windsor*," and was enchanted with the Park, the trees, everything.'

As the Queen had not visited Paris, the susceptibilities of the French, it was thought, might be wounded, if their King should go to London. This was so well understood, and the satisfaction created by a visit, which promised to be fraught with important results to the welfare of both countries, was at the same time so strongly felt, and nowhere more than in the central seat of English wealth and commerce, that the Corporation of London resolved to go from London to Windsor in full civic state—an unprecedented departure from their established rule—for the purpose of presenting an Address of congratulation to the King. This was done upon the 12th of October, and its effect upon French feeling was excellent. Not less so was that produced here by the language of the King's reply: 'The union of France with England,' he said, 'is of great importance to both nations, but not from any wish of aggrandisement on the part of either. Our view should be peace, while we leave every other country in possession of those blessings which it has pleased Divine Providence to bestow upon them. France has nothing to ask of England, and England has nothing to ask of France, but cordial union.'

The King's reply had been prepared for him in the ordinary way, and the writer had trusted to his knowledge of English in making the translation to be used. But when it was put into the King's hands shortly before the arrival of the Corporation at the Castle, he found to his dismay that it was not merely so thoroughly French in tone, but

such very bad English, that it could not be used. '*C'est déplorable*,' exclaimed the King, '*c'est pitoyable. On m'a fait une réponse que je ne comprends pas. C'est un supplice; et m'envoyer cela à une heure! Ils vont arriver.*' Not a moment was to be lost. The King was alone with his hosts. He at once sat down, and with their assistance wrote out an answer, more in accordance with the genius of the language in which it was couched and of the people to whom it was to be given. It proved most successful; and the King was so delighted with the way in which it was received, that he said to the Queen and Prince the same evening, '*C'est ma bonne étoile, qui vous a menés chez moi dans ce moment.*'

The next day he was full of regrets at the approaching conclusion of his visit, and urgent in expression of his desire that intimate relations should be kept up by the exchange of visits between the Royal Houses of England and France. '*Je crois*,' he said to his hosts, '*que nos affaires s'arrangeront bien, c'est à dire, les grandes; il ne faut pas se soucier des petites. Vous savez qu'on m'appelle "le juste milieu,"*' adding that this was the only principle to act upon, '*parceque malheureusement il n'y a que peu de bons et bien des mauvais.*' As for peace, that he *would* maintain always. Then, the Queen's *Journal* records, 'He spoke in the highest terms of Albert. "*Oh! Il fera merveille; il est si sage; il ne se presse pas; il gagne tant à être connu; il vous donnera toujours de bons conseils. Ne croyez pas que je vous dis cela pour vous flatter. Non, non! Cela vient du cœur. Il sera comme son oncle, aussi sage et aussi bon. C'est ce que je viens d'écrire à ma bonne Louise. Il vous sera de la plus grande utilité, et il vous tiendra bien de côté, si des temps de vicissitudes venaient,—ce qui j'espère ne sera pas; mais enfin on ne peut jamais savoir.*" He was most kind and paternal, and pleased and touched me. Both

the Emperor and the King of the French, two most different people, have joined in the same opinion about my beloved Albert.'

On the 14th the visit came to a close. It was the King's intention to return, as he had come, by way of Portsmouth. Thither, accordingly, he was accompanied by the Queen and Prince. On their arrival, however, the weather was so wet and tempestuous, that the idea of crossing from Portsmouth to Tréport had to be abandoned, and the King returned to France by way of Dover and Calais. So serious a disturbance of the preconcerted arrangements could only be overcome by unusual energy and forethought. Prince Albert, with his accustomed clearness and promptitude, took the matter in hand. 'He never,' the Queen's *Journal* records, 'makes difficulties, but on the contrary always manages that a thing can be done.' And his arrangements were seconded with such good will, that after a very brief delay the King was able to start for Dover, and found everything prepared for him along the route, as if the usual deliberate notice of Royal movements had been given. "*Ce n'est que dans cet admirable pays que cela peut se faire*," were the King's words, in announcing the same evening to Her Majesty his arrival at Dover.

The chagrin of Admiral La Susse and the officers of his squadron, who had brought over the King, at the alteration of plan was very great. The warmest courtesies had passed between them and the English officers resident at Portsmouth, and to compensate in some measure for their disappointment, the Queen and Prince, who had passed the night on board Her Majesty's Yacht, breakfasted the following morning on board the 'Gomer,' the frigate which had brought over the King. The enthusiasm of the French was wrought to the highest pitch by Her Majesty proposing and drinking the King's health.

So ended a visit, which, coming as it did at a time when a considerable amount of jealous and even angry feeling had sprung up between this country and France, had a most salutary effect in obliterating its effects, and drawing the nations together in the bonds of mutual confidence and friendliness.

Soon afterwards another event of national interest occurred in the opening of the new Royal Exchange, on the 28th of October, by the Queen in State. 'Nothing,' Her Majesty writes to King Leopold the next day, 'ever went off better, and the procession there, as well as the proceedings at the Royal Exchange, were splendid and royal in the extreme. It was a fine and gratifying sight to see the myriads of people assembled, more than at the Coronation even, and all in such good humour and so loyal. I seldom remember being so pleased with any public show, and my beloved Albert was most enthusiastically received by the people. . . . The articles in the papers, too, are most kind and gratifying. They say, no Sovereign was ever more loved than I am (I am bold enough to say), and *this* because of our happy domestic home, and the good example it presents.'

The feeling, to which voice was thus given by the Press, had taken wide root in the country. It was based upon two grounds: the exemplary home life of the Queen and Prince, and the purely Constitutional attitude with relation to political parties which had been maintained by the Sovereign. This was expressed very emphatically by Lord Spencer at a meeting of Liberals at Northampton in the following month. 'Here, after four years,' the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar, when sending him a report of the meeting, 'is the recognition of the position we took up from the first. You always said that if Monarchy was to rise in popularity, it could only be by the Sovereign leading an exemplary life, and keeping quite aloof from and above

party. Melbourne called this "nonsense." Now Victoria is praised by Lord Spencer the Liberal for giving her Constitutional support to the Tories.'

At Northampton itself, which had the reputation of being a centre of Radicalism, the Queen and Prince had the most satisfactory evidence that loyalty was the prevailing sentiment, as they passed through that town on their way to visit Lord Exeter at Burleigh on the 12th of November, where they remained till the 15th. These visits to the great nobility, gratifying at once to those who received and those who gave them, were most popular. They were so eagerly sought for, that it was difficult for the Sovereign to select from the rival claims upon her notice. In the case of the visit to Burleigh, it was called to mind that, when Queen Elizabeth had made a Royal Progress to that stately manor-house, the roads were so bad that Her Majesty was obliged to ride upon a pillion behind the Lord Steward, a mode of travelling which would have taxed the gravity of the thousands who thronged the roads to see her successor pass.

The year, which was now drawing to a close, had been most eventful, both publicly and privately, to the Prince; and in concluding his Diary for December he writes: 'I take leave with reluctance of this year, which has comprised so many momentous events, and which had grown dear to me through my very grief for the heavy loss it brought me.'

At such a time the Prince's thoughts naturally turned to Baron Stockmar, who had gone home to Coburg some months before. Writing to wish him a very happy new year, he continues: 'May it in all respects turn out to your heart's content, and then serve as the exemplar for many yet to come! May nothing interfere to disturb a relation, which, as it rests upon a sympathy of soul with soul, and upon the common aim to make the best out of the world around us, has a solid basis,—I mean our friendship, which is now entering upon its sixth year!'

At the same moment a letter from Baron Stockmar was on its way to the Prince, which concluded with the words: 'I have received a letter from the Queen, which begins, "My kind friend,"—"Like the Quaker," you will say—and goes on, "but I like to call you what you really are." The Queen could not have made me a finer New Year's Gift than these lines, and I beg you will in the meanwhile be graciously pleased to express my warmest thanks for them.'

CHAPTER XIII.

To ESCAPE for a time from the oppressive splendour and state of Courts into the comparatively retired and simple ways of the rest of mankind, has always been a cherished object of kings and princes. Nature rebels against a life in which privacy is well nigh impossible, in which every hour is forestalled by the claims of business or ceremonial, in which there is no room for the freedom of movement, the chance greetings, the pleasant surprises, the unnoticed rambles, which sweeten the days of ordinary people. Seemingly, the most free and independent of mankind, there are few whose hours and doings are less at their own disposal. Sovereigns, moreover, are too far removed by their rank from most of those around them to get near what is best in men; and it is their fate to see, as few can see, much of the selfishness and insincerity which play so large a part in both social and political life. There is to them, therefore, a tenfold zest in shaking off for a time the trammels of their state, and in forgetting, among the sweet sights and sounds of the country,

> The noise and strife, and questions wearisome,
> And the vain splendours of imperial Rome.

Who can echo with so much truth as they can the words of Cowley, when contrasting the life of the country with that of the town? 'We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature; we are there among the pitiful shifts of

policy: we walk here in the light and open ways of the Divine bounty; we grope there in the dark and confused labyrinths of human malice: our senses are here feasted with the clear and genuine taste of their objects, which are all sophisticated there, and for the most part overwhelmed with their contraries.'

The simple domestic tastes of the Queen and Prince, no less than their profound delight in natural beauty, gave, in their case, intensity to this natural yearning for some quiet 'loophole of retreat.' The estate of Osborne, in the Isle of Wight, which seemed to combine many of the qualities most likely to be valued by them, had been brought to their notice by Sir Robert Peel.[1] It was near the seat of government, yet so 'exempt from public haunt,' that they might there be sure of the repose and privacy which they desired. It afforded scope for the exercise of the Prince's skill in laying out grounds, in planting, in agricultural improvement. It commanded a noble sea view, with Portsmouth and the great roadstead of Spithead in the background, always to a British Sovereign a spectacle of the highest interest, and it was bounded by a great stretch of sea-shore. As a bathing place it was excellent, and for this purpose Brighton, the Pavilion at which had hitherto been the marine residence of the Sovereign, had become unfit, in consequence of the great increase of the town, which had grown round it to such an extent, that it was impossible to catch more than a glimpse of the sea from some of the upper windows.

The opportunity afforded by the journey with the King of the French to Portsmouth in October was taken to make a personal inspection of this property. The Queen and

[1] 'It was entirely through Sir Robert Peel,' Her Majesty writes, 'who knew how much we wished for a private property, and his extreme kindness, that we heard of and all about Osborne. When we showed him all we had done in 1849, he spoke with evident pleasure of his having been the means of our getting it.'

Prince were so much pleased with what they then saw of it, that negotiations for its purchase were set on foot, which came to a satisfactory conclusion a few months afterwards. One charm it had, which all can feel and sympathise with. It was their own. 'It sounds so pleasant,' the Queen writes, when announcing the purchase (25th March, 1845) to King Leopold, 'to have a place of one's own, quiet and retired, and free from all Woods and Forests and other charming departments, which really are the plague of one's life.' 'It is impossible,' Her Majesty adds, a few days later, writing from her new possession, 'to see a prettier place, with woods and valleys, and *points de vue*, which would be beautiful anywhere; but when these are combined with the sea (to which the woods grow down), and a beach which is quite private, it is really everything one could wish.'

The first purchase comprised only the estate of Osborne, about 800 acres, belonging to Lady Isabella Blatchford. This, however, was added to by various purchases from time to time, and the property now extends to about 2,300 acres. It was soon found that the existing mansion-house was too small for the Royal establishment, and on the 23rd of June, 1845, the first stone of the present house was laid by the Queen and Prince.[2] In September of the following year, that portion of it known as the Pavilion, which contains the Royal apartments, was completed and occupied. The rest of the house was not finished till 1851; and in laying out the grounds,—which he did with masterly skill, turning all their natural features to the best account,—and in bringing the whole property into the highest state of cultivation, the

[2] 'The house,' the Queen writes, 'was planned by the Prince, and his wishes were most admirably carried out by the late Mr. Thomas Cubitt, than whom a better, kinder man did not exist.' In laying out the grounds, and in his farming operations, Her Majesty adds, 'The Prince was ably seconded by Mr. Toward, our land steward for twenty-six years.'

Prince found a delightful occupation from 1845 onwards.[3] In truth he might have said, as Scott did of Abbotsford, 'My heart clings to the place I have created. There is scarce a tree in it that does not owe its existence to me.'

His labours were amply repaid by the results. His plantations, rich in an unusual variety of conifers and flowering shrubs, gladdened his eyes by the vigorous luxuriance of their growth, and in them the nightingale 'trilled her thick-warbled note the summer long.' Of all the songs of birds he loved these the most, listening for them 'in the happy peaceful walks he used to take with the Queen in the woods, and whistling to them in their own long, peculiar note, which they invariably answered,' or standing out at night on the balcony, to hear their song (*Note by the Queen, Early Years*, p. 195). Every year the place grew in beauty and in charm; and so well were his measures taken for bringing the results of the highest skill and science to bear upon the land, that, unlike most amateur agriculturists, he made his farming pay. In this result he took an especial pride. Any one with means at his command can improve land, but to make costly improvements pay for themselves is the test of practical forethought and wise economy, on which, in all human affairs, the Prince set the greatest store.

Before settling down in town for the coming Parliamentary season, which promised to be one of unusual interest and activity, two of those visits were paid by the Queen and Prince, which afforded so much gratification to their hosts, and also to the inhabitants of the districts where they were

[3] 'It is pleasant,' says Lady Lyttelton, writing from Osborne (9th August, 1846), 'to see how earnestly Prince Albert tries to do the best about this place, giving work to as many labourers as possible, but not making any haste, so as to make it last, and keep at a steady useful pitch, not to over-excite the market. His bailiff (I mean, of course, the Queen's) has dismissed quantities of men lately, because it is harvest time, that they may work for others, telling them all, that the moment any man is out of employment, he is to come back here, and will, without fail, find work to do. This is doing good very wisely.'

made. The first of these was to the Duke of Buckingham at Stowe, to which they went on the 14th of January. The splendour of their reception was only equalled by the conspicuous courtesy of the lordly owner of this magnificent place, who spared no effort to prove his devotion to the Sovereign, or his respect for her Consort. After a two days' stay, and a brief return to Windsor Castle, the Queen and Prince went, upon the 20th, to visit the Duke of Wellington at Strathfieldsaye, which, if less magnificent than Stowe, more than made up for this by the interest which attached to its owner. The Duke had long looked forward to the pleasure of receiving Her Majesty under his roof, and it was obvious from all that passed on this occasion, that no higher gratification could have been given to his old age than to see his wish thus realised. 'The Duke,' writes Mr. Anson, 'takes the Queen in to dinner, and sits by Her Majesty, and after dinner gets up and says, "With Your Majesty's permission, I give the health of Her Majesty," and then the same for the Prince. They then adjourn to the library, and the Duke sits on the sofa by the Queen for the rest of the evening, until eleven o'clock, the Prince and the gentlemen being scattered about in the library or the billiard-room, which opens into it. In a large conservatory beyond, the band of the Duke's Grenadier regiment plays through the evening.'[1]

After the usual two days' stay, the Queen and Prince returned, on the 23rd of January, to Windsor Castle. The

[1] Mr. Anson also notes, that the Duke, under provocation from certain 'curious impertinents,' had put up a large notice in the grounds, desiring that people who wish to see the house may drive up to the hall-door and ring the bell, but that they are to abstain from walking on the flagstones and looking in at the windows! The papers of the day contained the following characteristic reply by the Duke to an application from some newspaper for admission to note the particulars of the Royal visit: 'F. M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. ——, and begs to say he does not see what his house at Strathfieldsaye has to do with the public press.'

opening of Parliament was now imminent. 'On the 4th of February,' the Prince writes to Stockmar, 'Parliament is to be opened, and then the Ministry will have their hands full. Peel proves himself a sagacious, honourable statesman.'

The Royal Speech, delivered by Her Majesty in person, after referring to the recent visits of the Emperor of Russia and the King of the French in very cordial terms, announced two great measures,—both of which might be expected to encounter the most formidable opposition. One of these was a scheme of fiscal Reform, based upon a continuance of the Income Tax beyond the term of three years for which it had been originally granted, while the other had for its aim the 'improving and extending the opportunities for academical education in Ireland.' As the event proved, the financial programme of the Ministry, when developed, was found to be based on principles so sound, that its details were carried rapidly through Parliament with triumphant majorities. The other measure was of a twofold character, proposing, on the one hand, the establishment of Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway, which should be open to all without religious distinction, and, on the other, the increase of the annual grant to Maynooth from 9,000*l.* to 30,000*l.*; and it provoked such a storm of opposition as could only have been withstood by a Minister who was not to be shaken by clamour from a deeply rooted conviction, and who at the same time felt that he had at his back the support of a vast proportion of the independent thinkers of the country.

The last of these measures lost to Sir Robert Peel the support in the Cabinet of one of the most conspicuous of its members, Mr. Gladstone. It is thus that the Prince (8th February, 1845) announces the opening of the campaign to Baron Stockmar:—

'. . . . We have of late been very active. Peel has had

to reconstruct his whole government. Mr. Gladstone has retired upon the Catholic question. He has no objection to the measure—nay, he will support it—but thinks he has written something in a book of his (*The State in its relations with the Church*, 1839) which prevents him from taking part in it as Minister. . . .[5]

'The death of Lord St. Germans has removed Lord Elliot to the Upper House, and vacated the Secretaryship for Ireland. The following are the changes. Lord Lincoln has entered the Cabinet, and also Mr. Sidney Herbert as Secretary at War. Sir Thomas Fremantle is Secretary for Ireland, Lord Dalhousie has become President of the Board of Trade, and Sir George Clerk Vice-President in his stead, Mr. Corry Secretary of the Admiralty in room of Mr. Sidney Herbert, and Mr. H. Fitzroy (Rothschild's brother-in-law) Civil Lord of the Admiralty, in room of Corry. Mr. Cardwell (a most distinguished young man) replaces Sir G. Clerk at the Treasury. . . . Sir E. Knatchbull has still to be induced to resign, Mr. Bingham Baring to become Paymaster, and Lord Jocelyn to take his place as Secretary of the India Board.

'Peel has opened the campaign well: the Queen's Speech was very friendly towards France, and the address was carried *nemine dissentiente*, after a very bitter speech against the Ministry by Lord John.

'The Catholic Question, the renewal of the Income Tax, and reduction of other duties by way of compensation, large additional votes for the Navy, are the chief items of the Ministerial programme. The Opposition, on the other hand,

[5] The only important point on this head pressed by Mr. Gladstone in his speech on the Address (4th February, 1845) was this: 'I have a strong conviction, speaking under ordinary circumstances, and as a general rule, that those who have borne the most solemn testimony to a particular view of a great constitutional question ought not to be parties responsible for proposals which involve a material departure from them.' *Hansard*, vol. lxxvii. p. 79.

will make their chief stand on the Game Laws, and get up a popular feeling against the landowners because of their field sports.'

It was one, and not the least of the merits of Sir Robert Peel as a financier, that he had introduced the practice of being ready with his Budget at a very early period of the Session. Accordingly, within ten days after Parliament met he was able to develope to the House of Commons one of the boldest and most comprehensive schemes of fiscal Reform which had ever been brought forward, in a speech, which will always be regarded as a masterpiece of clear exposition and weighty argument. The outlines of his scheme are sketched with such admirable closeness and precision in the letter by the Prince presently to be quoted, that any further statement of them would be superfluous. In the course of his speech, the Premier took occasion, in terms peculiarly gratifying to the Prince, to call attention to the fact, that the recent visits of Royal and Imperial personages had involved no additional expense to the country. Thanks to his reforms in the administration and management of the Royal Household, which had established economy without abridging any of the appropriate munificence of the arrangements, the Civil List had been fully adequate to the extra demands made upon it by the magnificent receptions given to the Sovereigns of Russia and France. No one knew better than Sir Robert Peel how much this result was due to the sagacity and firmness of the Prince, under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty, for he had been consulted by the Prince, and his approval secured, at every stage of the arrangements.

'Here,' said Sir Robert Peel, 'I may be permitted to say, that any Executive Government that would have a due regard to the exercise of a wise and judicious economy could not do better than follow the example which has been set them by the control

exercised over Her own expenditure by the Sovereign. A settlement was made of the Civil List on Her accession to the throne On the occasion of Her marriage no addition was made to that Civil List. It has pleased God to bless that marriage by the birth of four children, which has made a considerable additional demand upon the Civil List. In the course of last year three Sovereigns visited this country; two of them the most powerful Sovereigns in the habitable globe—the Emperor of Russia and the King of the French. Those visits of necessity created a considerable increase of expenditure; but through that wise system of economy, which is the only source of true magnificence, Her Majesty was enabled to meet every charge, and to give a reception to those Sovereigns, which struck every one by its magnificence, without adding one tittle to the burdens of the country. And I am not required on the part of Her Majesty, to press for the extra expenditure of one single shilling on account of these unforeseen causes of increased expenditure. I think that to state this is only due to the personal credit of Her Majesty, who insists upon it that there shall be every magnificence required by Her station, but without incurring a single debt.'

In this language the Prince knew there was a triumph also for Baron Stockmar, who had guided the counsels of the Queen and himself in initiating and carrying through the Household reforms, which had been attended with such happy results. He therefore enclosed this part of the Minister's speech in the same letter, which gave a summary of the Ministerial Budget:—

'Dear Stockmar,— . . . Peel surprised the world with his financial statements the day before yesterday. The surplus is 5,800,000*l.*; consequently, even although the Income Tax should be taken off, despite the enormous reduction of taxes in the tariff of 1842, and again last year upon wool, sugar, &c., the revenue is brought up to such a condition as still to show a surplus. What elasticity in the resources of this country and of trade generally! Emboldened by this great

result of his manipulation, he purposes going further, asks for the Income Tax for three years more, and takes off at one stroke all export duties, including those upon coals, the duty upon auctions, the whole duty of 300 per cent. upon glass, the whole import duties upon cotton, reduces the duty upon sugar from 28*s.* to 14*s.*, lets in dye-woods and hoops free, and erases altogether from the Excise book 300 smaller articles, which, under the tariff of 1842, pay customs duties. By this immense relief will be given to the poorer classes, trade and industry will be revived, and in their elasticity Peel has such confidence, that he expects to be quite able by 1848 to show an adequate revenue without the Income Tax.

'In this state of matters he has asked for the Navy and Ordnance estimates an increase of a million and a half, to place England's power at sea in a more worthy light before the world, whilst for the security of our ports seven sail of the line are always to be available in the Channel, and three on foreign stations. I think that in this a renewed guarantee is given for the peace of Europe.

'I send herewith a portion of the speech which has reference to the Court, and is said to have produced a good effect.

'Brighton, 16th February, 1845'

Before this letter reached Baron Stockmar, he had replied to the Prince's letter of the 8th. The measures which it announced had his entire sympathy. He was fully prepared for the outburst of quasi-religious excitement, which was certain to be provoked by the proposal of the increased grant to Maynooth. But he had weighed its influence thoroughly, and felt confident that the time had come, when the highest conditions of state policy required that it should be met by firm resistance. What he would have thought of a statesman who should have yielded to it may be seen by a passage of his answer to the Prince. 'Religious intolerance has

always been to my mind the surest proof, that a man has no aptitude for the art of governing men. This intolerance is partly due to weakness in the intellectual faculty, partly to want of a genial temperament (*Gemüth*), partly to both.' He was glad, therefore, to find that Peel, in bringing forward this measure, was not hampered by any hesitation or conflict of opinion among the members of his Cabinet. 'If he only keeps his health,' he says in conclusion, 'and does not allow himself to be shaken from his opinions—that is, if on all occasions he resigns rather than give way to the unreasonable demands of his own party, then I have no doubt he will weather the Parliamentary campaign this time, as he did the last, with benefit to the country and honour to himself.'

Writing again to the Prince a few days later (28th February) after he had read Peel's financial exposition, he says:—

'I follow with close attention the course of Peel's financial measures. So far as I can form a judgment at this distance, his principles appear thoroughly sound. Heaven grant him success! He deserves it, for he fights fairly, and whatever his enemies may say, he serves his country truly and unselfishly. I honour, for my part, truth and unselfishness more than all else that gives worth to men.

'That part of his speech which referred to the Court I had already read, as also, somewhat later, another speech, which refers to Your Royal Highness alone. What can it be which has led to the re-opening of that report? . . . Meanwhile, on this head I write a word of warning and entreaty. Never abandon your firm, lofty, powerful, impregnable position, in order to run after trifles (*um Schmetterlinge zu haschen*). You have the substance: stick by it for the good of your wife and children, and do not suffer yourself to be seduced

even by the wishes of affection into bartering substance for show.'

The allusion in the concluding part of this letter is to the revival of an unfounded report, that the title of King Consort was about to be conferred upon the Prince. It was, no doubt, the fact that, so far back as 1841, Her Majesty, painfully impressed by the anomalous position of the Prince, had wished that this might be done. In the words of her own *Journal*, (28th December, 1841), 'He ought to be, and is above me in everything really, and therefore I wish that he should be equal in rank to me.' Unknown to the Prince, she had fully canvassed the subject with Baron Stockmar. She found him, however, strongly opposed to the suggestion; and, by Her Majesty's desire, he took means to ascertain the opinions of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen. They both concurred in the conclusion he had himself arrived at. In common with himself, they felt how desirable it was to have a clear recognition of the status of the Prince. But although there was nothing in the Constitution expressly against such a title, a King Consort without joint sovereignty would be a novelty, and no provision for such a condition of things existed in the Constitution. It was therefore decided to abandon the project, and to leave to time and circumstance to suggest some solution of the difficulty, when the Prince should be better known by the nation, and the general current of opinion should justify some decided action.

Her Majesty's feeling on the subject could not be known, even within the intimacy of the Court circle, without some hint of it finding its way into general society. Probably, too, the views of Sir Robert Peel were not unknown; and it may have been thought by his adversaries,—ignorant and, it may be, disinclined to believe, how impossible it was for Her Majesty to be swayed in such a matter by any personal con-

siderations,—that advantage might be taken of his supposed hostility to her cherished wish to weaken his influence as a Minister. It is difficult, at least, to divine any other reason for the appearance, in the *Morning Chronicle*, at this time, of a paragraph stating that it was rumoured, 'and we believe on good authority,' that the title of King Consort was about to be conferred upon the Prince. This, the paragraph continued, with an obviously unfriendly reference to the Prince himself, 'will, we presume, be preliminary to a demand for an increased grant.' On the 17th of February, Mr. Peter Borthwick put the question to Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons, whether there was any truth in the rumour, adding, while he did so, 'that it was sufficiently absurd to contradict itself.' In reply, Sir Robert said that if this were so, it was rather hard that he should be put to the ordeal of answering the question. 'Inferences,' he continued, 'were sometimes drawn from silence, when, on the whole, silence would be the best possible course to observe; but to guard against the possibility of any erroneous inferences, he would state, for the information of the hon. gentleman, that that paragraph was wholly without foundation.'—*Hansard*, vol. lxxvii., p. 530.

In his reply to Baron Stockmar, the Prince was able to relieve the apprehensions upon this head, which had been expressed by his friend. At the same time, he was able to give him an assurance on another subject, which could scarcely have been less gratifying, as it was in entire conformity with the views which the Baron had himself expressed to Lord Aberdeen two years before, when, as already stated (p. 150, *supra*), they had discussed the suggestion that the Prince should be the next Commander-in-Chief.

'Dear Stockmar,— . . . The Royal Consort discussion was excessively unpleasant. The *Morning Chronicle* con-

tained an article about it, "on the best authority," and so provoked a newspaper controversy, and ultimately the question of Mr. Borthwick. The subject was never discussed here, and the affair must have been a piece of Opposition tactics to squeeze Peel between Victoria and the public. He, too, was startled, and was afraid "the authority" might have emanated from the Court. I seized the opportunity to discuss the question with him thoroughly, and also that of the Commandership-in-Chief. . . .

'With regard to the title, the upshot was, that it is power and not titles which are esteemed here, that the public are inclined to attach ridicule to everything of the sort, that there is a lack of good precedents, that there are great constitutional difficulties, &c.

'In regard to the Commandership-in-Chief, it was, that the Army would be greatly pleased by it,—that politically it would be the best arrangement, but that I should have to do the whole work myself, and must not delegate it to anybody else, if I am to be a real gainer by the appointment,—that this would absorb all my time and attention, and it is a question whether it is right to sacrifice for such an offer the duties which I owe to Victoria and to the education of our children.

'Peel regards my present position as extremely good, and thinks that, all in all, Monarchy never stood so well. He says, that despite the encroachments of democracy, "there was something (considering the sex of the Sovereign, the private character of the family, &c.) in the position, that worked strongly on the feelings of the nation."'

'Buckingham Palace, 9th March, 1845'

By the middle of March, the financial measures of the Government had passed the ordeal of the House of Commons. Viewed as they were with the utmost favour by the great

body of the nation, this result was not to be arrested by the criticism to which some of the details were subjected by the advocates of particular interests which they threatened to affect, or by those who saw in them further signs of the Free Trade policy on which Sir Robert Peel had entered. But an incessant fire of invective and personal reproach from both sides of the House for the adoption of a policy, against which so many of his former acts and speeches might be quoted, taxed his constancy and self-command to the utmost, almost overborne as he was by the weight and multiplicity of the claims upon his attention. 'Peel works so hard,' Her Majesty writes (25th March), 'and has so much to do, that sometimes he says he does not know how he is to get through it all.' 'In these days,' the same letter says, 'a minister *does* require some encouragement, for the abuse and difficulties he has to contend with are dreadful.' Under this feeling, Her Majesty had sent to her Minister for his perusal a letter, speaking in warm terms of his policy, which she had received from King Leopold, and at the same time intimated her intention to act as sponsor to his grandchild, the son of Lord and Lady Villiers. In his reply to this communication (25th March), after acknowledging on behalf of Lady Peel and himself 'the signal mark of Your Majesty's gracious kindness and favour, which Your Majesty intends to confer upon them, and the family of Lord Jersey,' Sir Robert Peel continues:—

'Sir R. Peel is scarcely less obliged to Your Majesty for your goodness in communicating to him the favourable opinion which King Leopold has been pleased to express of the course of public policy, pursued with the sanction, and frequently under the special directions of Your Majesty, by Sir R. Peel. His Majesty has an intimate knowledge of this country, and is just so far removed from the scene of political contention here, as to be able to take a clear and dispassionate view of the motives and acts of public men. Sir R. Peel looks to no other reward, apart from Your

Majesty's favourable opinion, than that posterity shall hereafter confirm the judgment of King Leopold, that Sir R. Peel was a true and faithful servant of Your Majesty, and used the power committed to him for the maintenance of the honour and just prerogatives of the Crown, and the advancement of the public welfare. He would indeed have been utterly unworthy, if, after the generous confidence and support which he has invariably received from Your Majesty, he could have used power for any other purposes!'

A few days after this letter was written, the Maynooth Bill was introduced and read a first time on the 3rd of April. No one can look back at the debates which then commenced without appreciating in their full force 'the abuse and difficulties' referred to by Her Majesty, with which Sir Robert Peel had to contend. If the debates of more recent days are less animated by invective, or less brilliant with the half truths of which epigrams are made, they are at least less personal, and less calculated to embitter the days and nights, which must under any circumstances be all too anxious, of the responsible advisers of the Crown. After six nights of stormy debate, the second reading of the Bill was carried on the 18th of April, by a majority of 147 in a House of 499 members. At every subsequent stage the hostility to the measure was renewed, but without success, and it was not till the 21st of May that it passed the third reading of the Lower House by a majority of 133.

Writing from Claremont to Baron Stockmar, on the 13th of April, whilst the discussions on the second reading were at their height, the Prince says:—

'Dear Stockmar,—. . . We are in the midst of the most fearful agitation. Sir Robert has brought forward his Maynooth Bill, and has two-thirds of his own party against him. The Whigs are compelled to support him, but naturally they do this in such a way as to do him as much

harm as possible. Of bigotry, uncharitableness, intolerance, and spite there is no end. A whole torrent of Petitions laden with these is poured into Parliament. A single member laid 100 two days ago upon the table of the House of Commons, and of these several were for Sir Robert's impeachment. Gladstone speaks and votes now for the Bill, and strangely enough, although his doing so is at variance with his most cherished feelings.[6] Sir Robert Inglis heads the Opposition, Lord Ashley, Mr. Thomas Duncombe, and Mr. Disraeli fight in the front ranks. . . .

'The Opposition (the Liberals, I mean) have given notice of a motion which Mr. Ward is to bring forward against Sir R. Peel's Bill, to the effect "that the money for the increase to Maynooth should not be paid by the people, but be taken from the revenues of the Protestant Church in Ireland." This is to be so put, that the Tories can vote in favour of it, and so Peel be left in a pitiful minority. He, on the other hand, declares that he *will* carry through the Bill, and that goes a great way.

'Claremont, 13th April, 1845.'

The taunts which were so freely hurled at the Premier by friend and foe for adopting a policy of conciliation to Ireland at variance with so many of the old prejudices of the party, which he was presumed to represent, were no doubt the legitimate weapons of party warfare. They left, it is true, the real question at issue—the inherent justice and wisdom of the measure—wholly untouched. But this could mitigate but little the pain of having to stand the brunt night after night

[6] 'Deeply cherished predilections' are Mr. Gladstone's words, as given in Hansard's report of the Maynooth Debate (11th April, 1845), and they drew upon him the fire of the Hon. George Smythe, one of the foremost of those brilliant skirmishers of the Young England party, who in those days lost no opportunity of harassing the flanks of Sir Robert Peel's administration, even when, as in this case, they voted for his measures.

of home thrusts like the following—comparatively temperate as it was—and to feel at the same time how impossible it was to meet them by such arguments as are alone available amid the passions of debate:—

'All those fierce spirits,' said Macaulay, speaking on the 14th of April, 'whom you hallooed on to harass us, now turn round and begin to worry you. The Orangeman raises his war-whoop: Exeter Hall sets up its bray: Mr. Macneile shudders to see more costly cheer than ever provided for the priests of Baal at the table of the Queen: and the Protestant Operatives of Dublin call for impeachments in exceedingly bad English. But what did you expect? Did you think, when, to serve your turn, you called the devil up, that it was as easy to lay him as to raise him? Did you think, when you went on, session after session, thwarting and reviling those whom you knew to be in the right, and flattering all the worst passions of those whom you knew to be in the wrong, that the day of reckoning would never come? It has come.'

Excellent rhetoric. But what statesman has not at some time laid himself open to this species of personal reproach? Not all statesmen, however, have the courage not to be daunted by it, even where higher considerations are at stake than a party triumph, or a consistency which, however respectable, is certainly incompatible with the growth of every active and observant mind. It is one of the functions of the Sovereign of a Constitutional Monarchy, as these were understood by the Queen and Prince, especially in times of violent party conflict, to look at the issues raised by great public measures with eyes undimmed by the clouds of party feeling, and to value them only as they are, to the best of their judgment, designed for the ultimate welfare of the state. Satisfied of this, the Minister was most likely to command their respect who was not to be deterred by 'threats of pain or ruin,' or by the phantoms of opinions which he had outgrown, from doing what he conceived the actual circumstances of the hour seemed to demand.

Deeply sensible of the courage and distinguished ability with which Sir Robert Peel had vindicated the present measure, in the face of an opposition which numbered more than 100 of his own party, and was envenomed by a rancour in which the amenities of public life were too frequently forgotten, Her Majesty had considered whether there were any means by which she could mark her sense of the importance of the measure, and also her confidence in the Minister who had brought it forward. With this view, Lord Aberdeen was asked, whether it would be desirable on public grounds, and personally gratifying to Sir Robert Peel, to offer him the Order of the Garter. The only difficulty entertained by Lord Aberdeen was the personal scruple which he had reason to anticipate, from what he knew of his friend and leader, might be felt about accepting so distinguished an honour. He therefore undertook to sound him upon the subject. The result is well known. If he could think, was Sir Robert Peel's reply, that to accept would forward the measure he had in hand, and thereby advance the service of the Sovereign, he should not hesitate to do so. But he saw no reason for such a conclusion. It was well known, that he possessed Her Majesty's confidence, and the general impression to that effect would not be strengthened by this mark of her favour. As far as personal feeling went, he would rather decline it. He sprang from the people, and was essentially of the people, and such an honour in his case would be misapplied. His heart was not set upon titles of honour, or social distinctions. His reward lay in Her Majesty's confidence, of which by many indications she had given him the fullest assurance, and when he left her service the only distinction he coveted was, that she should say to him, 'You have been a faithful servant, and have done your duty to your country and to myself.'

The Maynooth Bill was still in Committee, when Parlia-

ment adjourned for the Whitsun holidays on the 9th of May. The next day the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar:—

'Dear Stockmar,—Here we are at the Whitsun holidays, when the weary combatants in Parliament and the tired-out epicureans fly from town for a little fresh air. We do the same, exhausted partly by business, partly by the so-called social pleasures, and are off at noon to-day to the Isle of Wight with Charles (Prince Leiningen), who has been with us for four days, and the two oldest children. Osborne is bought, and, with some adjoining farms, which we have also bought, makes a domain of 1,500 acres in a ring fence.

'The religious warfare continues, but Peel is a gainer by the lengthened duration of the debate, which is now adjourned to the 19th, as the excitement, which has been in a great measure produced by extraneous stimulants, will not hold out so long.

'The weather is frightfully cold and disagreeable, still both crops and grass promise well.

'Buckingham Palace, 10th May, 1845.'

The prediction here made that the Ministry gained by the duration of the Debate was verified by the result. This was shown by the large majority in a very full house, which marked its final stage in the House of Commons, and by an equally overwhelming majority on the third reading (16th June) in the House of Lords.

It is said by Mr. Disraeli, in his *Life of Lord George Bentinck* (Chapter I.), that, 'practically speaking, the Conservative Government at the end of the Session of 1845 was stronger than even at the commencement of the Session of 1842.'[7] Such was not, however, the opinion of its leader.

[7] The rest of the paragraph, as representing the view taken of the situation by one who was perhaps too warmly engaged in the struggle to see its whole bearings, is not unimportant. 'If they had forfeited the hearts of their ad-

Notwithstanding the success of his chief measures, the events of the session had been sufficient to satisfy Sir Robert Peel that his tenure of office had become most precarious. His own position there was uncomfortable and uncertain, and he thought it his duty at this time to prepare the Queen and the Prince, through the medium of Lord Aberdeen, for the possibility of a Ministerial crisis. Nothing, he explained, but a conviction of the absolute necessity for a change would induce him to subject Her Majesty to the embarrassment which it involved, but the condition of parties was such, that at any moment it might become inevitable.

It has long been accepted as understood, that it was Sir Robert Peel's opinion, in common with that of Mr. Canning, that the Prime Minister should be in the House of Commons. Such was his opinion for a great part of his career; but his experience of the last four years had led him to a different conclusion. Among Mr. Anson's Memoranda of this period, he reports a conversation with Lord Aberdeen, in which this change in Sir Robert Peel's views was fully canvassed. The amount of work imposed upon the first Minister in the House of Commons, in addition to what he had to go through elsewhere, was too great for any human strength. In the House of Lords the Premier would escape the necessity for being in a position to vindicate all the details of administration, and to answer the multiplicity of questions on all sorts of subjects, the putting of which has almost degenerated into a vice. He had therefore come to the conclusion that it was there he ought to be.

In his own case he found it less embarrassing to take the whole lead in the House of Commons, than to delegate any

herents, they had not lost their votes; while both in Parliament and in the country they had succeeded in appropriating a mass of loose superficial opinion not trammelled by party ties, and which complacently recognised in their measures the gradual and moderate fulfilment of a latitudinarian policy both in Church and State.'

part of this duty to subordinate members of the Cabinet. He had, accordingly, done so, except in respect to the Home Office, where everything was left to Sir James Graham. The fatigue was overwhelming of getting up cases daily, to answer questions, many of them, especially in regard to Foreign Politics, on subjects wholly new to him. Much as he liked his position, he was often worn out with the strain upon his brain and feelings, baited and badgered as he was by both sides of the Houses, and, if he had only his own inclination to consult, he would be glad to be relieved of his responsibilities. The old landmarks of party were rapidly disappearing; and, but that all experience was adverse to Coalitions, he would have looked forward to the probability of a fusion of parties, as, except on the question of the Irish Church (which, again, was regarded with conflicting views by men of both sides), there was hardly a shade of difference in their opinions.

The events of the next few months showed how well grounded were Sir Robert Peel's anticipation that a Ministerial crisis was not far off. He had carried the great measures of the Session, including that for the Endowment of what had at once been denounced by its religious opponents as 'the godless Colleges,' but his success had been due to the votes of the Opposition. Even those for whose immediate advantage his Irish policy had been designed, accepted with a grudge the boon which was offered to them, and already apprehensions were entertained by far-sighted politicians, that it would not be attended with the healing influences upon Irish party feeling which had been anticipated. This seems to have struck Baron Stockmar, and found expression in the following letter to the Prince. The letter to which it is an answer has, unfortunately, not been preserved:—

'So far as distance and my imperfect means of information

allow, I follow the course of public events anxiously and closely. That in the Irish question,—the vital one of all,—my good Sir Robert has had, relatively speaking, but a moderate success, troubles me. Again and again I ask myself to what this shortcoming is mainly due. I may be wrong, and my opinion, I fear, may moreover appear to Sir Robert like presumption, still I cannot refrain from avowing, that to me the main reason of the inadequate result seems to be this, that a political question which is intimately mixed up with the essence of Catholicism is handled by a Protestant Minister and a Protestant majority. By the nature of things Sir Robert cannot get out of his Protestant skin, and just as little can the Protestant majority of the House of Commons do so. I therefore charge the Minister as well as his advisers with lacking true knowledge of the nature of Catholicism; and in an emergency like the present an intimate knowledge of its nature is of the utmost importance, for all legislative measures which the Minister can bring into play, for the purpose of establishing a good relation between Protestant England and the Catholics, must in all respects be framed from the Catholic point of view. Were I an English Minister, before I decided on adopting any legislative measure, I would cause inquiry to be made by a Catholic on whose loyalty as well as his political sagacity I could rely, whether the measure were really in substance and form calculated to meet Catholic wants and feelings; and, acting upon this conviction, I would, for example, have entrusted the initiative in the preparation of the Bequests Bill (if possible) to a Catholic, reserving to the Government the defensive control over it.

'In the present phase of the Irish entanglement, the Confessional Question assumes a merely secondary place. The entanglement itself is essentially a state question, including

no doubt a religious element of considerable moment, but still primarily a political question, which can only be decided in the arena of practical politics. Nothing would more retard its satisfactory decision, than that the Confessional element, either through intrigue or blunder, should acquire a predominating influence in the discussion. Then most assuredly it would cease to be a special home British question, and would drop into the category of the Confessional controversies of the day, and at the same time throw one very heavy weight the more into the scale of those Confessional wranglings of which the Protestant section of Great Britain has already too many.

'Vienna, 16th June, 1845.'

The state of Ireland had by this time again become a source of great uneasiness. It had been hoped that the Queen would, in the course of the autumn, have been able to carry out her well-known desire to visit the country. In May an Address by the Corporation of Dublin had been presented to Her Majesty, in which it was stated that the mere rumour that she intended to visit Ireland had filled every heart with gladness; and they pledged themselves, that, 'warmly as she had been greeted elsewhere, her Irish subjects should not be exceeded in the true and hearty welcome, which with united voice should hail her on landing on their shores.' That they had the best reason for giving this assurance became very apparent, when, in a subsequent year, the contemplated visit was paid. But, in the reply to this address, the Queen, while assuring them, that 'whenever she might be enabled to receive in Ireland the promised welcome, she should rely with confidence upon the loyalty and affection of her faithful subjects,' was unable to assign a date for what was looked forward to with so much eagerness. The condi-

tion of the country was far from satisfactory. The Repeal Agitation had been resumed, agrarian crime was on the increase, and an unusually wet summer with the prospect of a bad harvest, and the first symptoms of the potato disease, which was soon to play so disastrous a part in the history of the country, had not tended to improve the aspect of affairs. Once more, therefore, it was deemed advisable to postpone the Royal visit; and, in its stead, a plan was formed for a brief tour by way of the Rhine to Saxony—a country which had naturally a strong attraction for the Queen, as the home of so many of her kindred, and still more as the birth-place of the Prince.

Meanwhile, the progress of events was watched by both the Queen and Prince with no ordinary anxiety. Nor was this diminished by the apprehension, that the management of affairs might soon pass from the hands of a statesman, whose sagacity had been proved by the increased prosperity of the country since his accession to power in 1841, and whose single-minded devotion to its best interests they had such good reason to know. The work of the Session was virtually over, when the Prince wrote to Baron Stockmar as follows:—

'Dear Stockmar,—Our property pleases us better and better every day, and is a most appropriate place of residence for us. It gives us the opportunity of inspecting the Experimental Squadron (which consists of 5 sail of the line, 4 frigates, and several steam-vessels), and of having it manœuvred before us. Since the war no such fleet has been assembled on the English coast, and it has this additional interest, that every possible new invention and discovery in the naval department will be tried.

'In politics we are drawing near the close of one of the

most remarkable sittings of Parliament. Peel has carried through everything with immense majorities, but it is certain he has no longer any stable Parliamentary support. His party is quite broken up, and the Opposition has as many different opinions and principles as heads.

'Buckingham Palace, 18th July, 1845.'

CHAPTER XIV.

On the 9th of August Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person; and the same evening Her Majesty and the Prince, attended by Lord Aberdeen and Lord Liverpool, Lady Gainsborough, Lady Canning, Mr. Anson, and Sir James Clark, sailed from Woolwich for Antwerp in the Royal yacht. Two days before Lord Campbell had asked in the House of Lords, whether it was not Her Majesty's intention, before leaving England, to appoint Lords Justices for the Administration of the Royal functions during her absence abroad, a measure which he contended was demanded by constitutional precedent. The reply of the Lord Chancellor (Lyndhurst) negatived the assumption that any such procedure was enjoined by the Constitution, or required by precedent. On the occasion of the Royal visit to Eu, the opinion of Sir Frederick Pollock and Sir William Follett had been taken; this was the conclusion then arrived at, and in which he himself entirely concurred. The question was simply one of expediency. Whatever might with perfect propriety have been required in former reigns, when the Continent was in a troubled state, and journeys were difficult and tedious, no necessity for such a formality existed now, when all was tranquil, and the Queen could return in two days from the farthest point to which she was going. Her Majesty was to be accompanied, moreover, by a Secretary of State, and any act which she could do as a Sovereign would have as much validity and effect if done on the continent of Europe as if

it were done within her own dominions. With this explanation, the point raised by Lord Campbell appears to have been taken as definitively settled.[1]

The previous fortnight had been passed by the Queen and Prince in their new island home, where the delicious air and the beautiful scenery of the southern side of the island were especially welcome after the agitations of the last few months. They came up to town on the 8th; and the Queen's *Journal* of that day, in its simple record of the feelings of Her Majesty in parting for a time from her home and children, speaks with irresistible eloquence of the happiness and charm with which the Prince's devotion had surrounded her domestic life.

'Friday, August 8, 1845.

'A very fine morning when we got up. Both Vicky and darling Alice were with me while I dressed. Poor, dear Puss would much have wished to go with us,—and often proposed how she might go, and said, "Why am I not going to Germany?" Most willingly would I have taken her, and I wished much to have taken one of dearest Albert's children with us to Coburg; but the journey is a serious undertaking, particularly the first time, and she is very young still. But what chiefly decided us is the visit to the King of Prussia, where I could not have looked after her. All four children were

[1] In illustration of his argument, that the former practice referred to by Lord Campbell had been dictated solely by the peculiar circumstances of the time, Lord Lyndhurst might have adverted to the fact that in 1572, before setting out on the Royal Progress, which included the famous visit to Kenilworth, Queen Elizabeth wrote to the Lord Mayor of London, that she had appointed for his assistance, 'during this time of our progress and absence in remote parts from thence, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and others . . . , that they shall join with you to devise . . . . for quiet order to be continued in our said city.' As in the instances cited by Lord Campbell where the Sovereign had gone out of the kingdom, the object in this case manifestly was to meet any sudden emergency, at a time when the means of travelling made it impossible for the Sovereign to return rapidly to the seat of government.

with us at breakfast—after which I gave Lady Lyttelton my last instructions, and then with a heavy heart we bade them all adieu in the Hall. Poor little Vicky seemed very sorry, but did not cry. . . . It was a very painful moment to drive away with the three poor little things standing at the door. God bless them and protect them, which He will! And they are in excellent hands. Our dear Osborne is so lovely and so enjoyable, that we left it with the greatest regret. . . . We reached Buckingham Palace at one. Everything so deserted and lonely here, and I miss the poor children so much.'

Sir Robert Peel was able in the course of the same day to give Her Majesty the most satisfactory assurances, that she left the country both prosperous and happy. His Irish measures in particular had to all appearance already begun to produce a tranquillising effect, and both Protestants and Catholics were combining in approval of the contemplated Colleges, which were to be immediately proceeded with. There was nothing, therefore, to damp the pleasure with which the Royal travellers looked forward to their German tour.

After a rough passage, the Royal yacht anchored before Antwerp about six on the evening of the 10th. It was 'a pouring melancholy evening,' says the Queen's *Journal*, 'when we went up after dinner, but nevertheless the poor people have illuminated Antwerp with those triangular illuminations on the tops of long poles, as they did when we were here before.' Next day, the same record continues, 'we got up at half-past five. The morning was cheerless, blowing, grey, and rainy. We breakfasted at six, and at half-past we left the yacht, and were amazingly danced about even for the few yards we had to go in the river to the landing-place. We were received by a guard of honour, and immediately proceeded in Uncle's carriages to the railroad. Passing through Antwerp put me so much in mind of two years ago, —the women in their hats and caps and cloaks, with their

jugs of brass, going to market, all looking so pretty and foreign—and to me so amusing and delightful, as everything new and interesting is.'

At Malines the Royal party was met by the King and Queen of the Belgians, who accompanied them as far as Verviers. Every point of beauty or interest in the fine country through which the railway passes was noted. Guards of honour saluted at every station, and the numerous tunnels between Liége and Verviers through which the traveller is swept from one lovely valley to another were lit up with lamps and torches. At the Prussian frontier, the train was met by Lord Westmoreland, our Prussian Ambassador, and the Chevalier Bunsen, together with the gentlemen of the Prussian Court, who had been appointed to attend upon the Queen and Prince, while on Prussian ground. 'To hear the people speak German,' writes the Queen,[2] 'and to see the German soldiers, &c., seemed to me so singular. I overheard people saying that I looked "*Sehr Englisch*" (very English). . . . The country about here put me much in mind of England,—no high hills, and the same sort of fields and meadows.'

The Queen and Prince were met at Aix-la-Chapelle by the King of Prussia. With him were the Prince of Prussia, Prince William (the King's uncle), Prince Frederick (the King's first-cousin and son of the Queen of Hanover), his son Prince Alexander, and many gentlemen in uniform. 'In the room of the station were assembled all the authorities, the Clergy, Catholic and Lutheran, and a number of young ladies dressed in white, one of whom, a daughter of the Burgomaster, recited some complimentary verses.' After visiting the Cathedral and other interesting buildings in the town, by which time evening was drawing on, the journey

[2] The extracts given in this chapter, unless otherwise mentioned, are from Her Majesty's *Journal*.

was resumed. In Cologne the reception was most enthusiastic. The city had to be crossed in carriages. The narrow streets were thronged with people, and decorated with streamers, and for a part of the distance the authorities had caused the roadway to be sprinkled with eau de Cologne,—whether to disguise the proverbial fragrance of the place, or in honour of the great local manufacture, may be left to conjecture. 'The King,' Her Majesty writes, 'never has an escort, and the people are wonderfully well behaved.'

From Cologne the Brühl station was reached by railway in fifteen minutes. Here the Royal party alighted, and drove to the Palace. 'One drives into the Hall, where a truly magnificent marble staircase begins, which, like the rest of the Castle, is in rococo style. The Queen, Princess of Prussia, Archduke Frederick of Austria, the Duchess of Anhalt-Dessau with her daughter, and the whole Court in state received us and showed us upstairs. . . . We went into one of the salons to hear the splendid *Zapfen-streich* (tattoo) performed before the Palace, by 500 musicians (military), the place being illuminated with torches and lamps of coloured glass, which had a splendid effect. The evening was lovely, and the whole thing the finest of the kind I ever witnessed. They played "God save the Queen," and it was better played than I ever heard it. So, too, thought Lord Aberdeen.'

Next day the Queen's *Journal* proceeds:—'We felt so strange to be in Germany at last, and at Brühl, which Albert said he used to go and visit from Bonn. . . . Immediately after breakfast we drove to the railroad (Albert with the King), the Queen, the Archduke (who has been sent here to compliment me), and the Prince of Prussia with me, and went by rail to Bonn. From the station we drove to the house of Prince Fürstenburg, a very rich and influential man, where we were received by the Prince and his wife. . . .

Many gentlemen connected with the University, and who had known Albert, were there, and were presented to me, which interested me much. They were greatly delighted to see Albert, and pleased to see me. Amongst them were Universitäts-Richter Salomon, Betthmann-Hollweg, Professor Walther. I felt as if I knew them all, from Albert having told me so much about them. We stepped on to the balcony to see the unveiling of Beethoven's Statue, in honour of which great festivities took place, concerts, &c. But, unfortunately, when the statue was uncovered, its back was turned to us. The *Freischützen* fired a *feu de joie*, and a chorale was sung. The people cheered us, and dear Albert most particularly, who is beloved here; and the band played a 'Dusch' at the same time, which is a flourish of trumpets, and is always given in Germany, when healths are drunk, &c. From here we drove with the King and Queen,—only a few of our suite following—to Albert's former little house. It was such a pleasure for me to be able to see this house. We went all over it, and it is just as it was, in no way altered. . . . We went into the little bower in the garden, from which you have a beautiful view of the Kreuzberg, a convent situated on the top of a hill. The *Sieben Gebirge* (Seven Mountains) you also see, but the view of them is a good deal built out.'

The same feeling which made the sight of the Prince's old rooms, and of his old friends and masters, so delightful to the Queen, gave a keen interest to the other features of the locality. Poppelsdorf, with its Museum of Minerals, &c., its beautiful terrace fragrant with orange-blossoms, its fine view of the distant *Sieben Gebirge*,—the pretty suburbs of Bonn itself, were duly visited; and the 'wild-looking students, with long hair and a pipe,' and the women with their 'curious caps and handkerchiefs,' did not escape their share of notice.

At four o'clock the same day a great banquet was given at

the Palace, at which, in addition to numerous Royal personages, all the most distinguished residents in Bonn and Cologne were present. The King, by nature an orator of a high order, seized the opportunity to propose the health of his Royal guests, in language which was well calculated to excite the warmest enthusiasm:—

'Gentlemen,' he said, 'fill your glasses! There is a word of inexpressible sweetness to British as well as to German hearts. Thirty years ago it echoed on the heights of Waterloo from British and German tongues, after days of hot and desperate fighting, to mark the glorious triumph of our brotherhood in arms. Now it resounds on the banks of our fair Rhine, amid the blessings of that peace which was the hallowed fruit of the great conflict. That word is, *Victoria!* Gentlemen, drink to the health of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (*bowing gracefully to the Queen*), and (*making his glass ring, according to German wont, against the glass of Prince Albert*) to that of her august Consort.'

'The Queen,' writes Bunsen, who was present, 'bowed at the first word, but much lower at the second. Her eyes brightened through tears, and, as the King was taking his seat again, she rose and bent towards him and kissed his cheek; then took her seat again, with a beaming countenance' (*Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 88).

The festivities of the day did not conclude with the dinner. Cologne was *en fête*, and illuminations on the grandest scale had been prepared. Thither accordingly the royal party went by rail, and embarked in a steamer upon the river to see the illuminations to the best advantage. A constant blaze of coloured lights, rockets, and salutes of every kind dazzled the eye and stunned the ear. The houses were many of them lit up so as to appear red hot, and the majestic Cathedral seemed to glow with fire. All this reflected in the steely waters of the Rhine produced the most splendid effect, which

not even the drizzle of a pretty continuous rain was able to destroy. 'The beauty of the scene,' Mr. Anson writes, 'was so fascinating that one quite forgot one was getting wet through, with the prospect of a long journey before getting home.'

No evil consequences ensued. It was long past midnight before Bruhl was reached; but by 10 o'clock next morning the Royal party were on their way to a great Concert at Bonn, which formed one of the important incidents of the Beethoven Festival. 'Unfortunately,' the Queen writes, 'though very well executed, there was but very little of Beethoven;—only part of one of the Symphonies, brought into a Cantata by Liszt, and the Overture to Egmont directed by Spohr. From here we drove to the University, where were drawn up all the Professors, who were all presented to me, and many of whom had taught my beloved Albert, and spoke with pleasure and pride of my all in all—Professor Harrles, Professor Perthes (from Gotha), Professor Arndt, a most distinguished and amiable old man—Professor Breitenstein, who taught Albert thorough bass. . . . Several of the students were there in the fine dress they wore at the Beethoven Festival, with the rapier in their hands; many fine young men, with loose hair, and beards and moustaches, and most with *Sabelhiebe* (sword-cuts) across their faces. It interested me exceedingly.' Later in the day a visit was paid to Cologne Cathedral, where the Queen and Prince were received by Archbishop Geisel in full canonicals, who addressed his Royal visitors in a speech which Her Majesty says was 'very good.' This was not the only speech upon the occasion. The great movement to raise funds for the completion of the building, which has since advanced it far towards completion, was then in its first vigour. All the local Associations for the purpose had lined the route to the Cathedral, and before the Queen and Prince left the building the head of these societies

(*Dom-Bau Vereine*) addressed them in a speech, couched in the very marked local dialect (*Kolner Sprache*), and presented them with the medals of the different Societies. On their return to Bruhl, the Queen found to her delight that the King and Queen of the Belgians had arrived. 'It seems,' she writes, 'like a dream to them and to me to see each other in Germany.' A great Concert concluded the evening. Meyerbeer conducted in person, and a Cantata by him, composed for the occasion in honour of our Queen, was sung by Staudigl, Pischek and others. Among the performers in the Concert were Jenny Lind, Madame Viardot, and *Liszt*.

'A rainy, despairing morning' next day augured badly for the Royal progress up the Rhine; but before the steamer in which the passage was to be made got under weigh, the sky cleared, and all that noble series of varied and beautiful landscapes between Bonn and Coblentz was seen to perfection. At Ehrenbreitstein, a storm of cannonading saluted the Royal guests, which was answered by the thunders of all the surrounding forts. A brisk musketry fire broke out also from about 20,000 troops, and brought vividly home to the imagination the din and lurid splendours of a battle. The clouds, as usual after so much firing, began to break, and before Schloss Stolzenfels, the King of Prussia's Castle, a few miles above Coblentz, was reached, heavy rain had set in. Not often, if ever, even upon the Rhine, has so distinguished a freight been borne along its waters,—three Queens, the Queens of England, Prussia, and Belgium—two Kings, those of Prussia and Belgium—a Prince Consort, an Archduke, and the Prince and Princess, whom we now know as Emperor and Empress of Germany. Many eminent personages accompanied them; of whom not the least distinguished was Baron A. von Humboldt.[3] Among the guests at the Castle

[3] This was not the only occasion on which the Prince met Humboldt, for whom he naturally entertained a profound admiration. 'What a loss,' he

were Prince and Princess Metternich. 'The Prince I found' (writes the Queen) 'much older than I expected, and laying down the law very much, and speaking very slow, but very amiable.' Of the exquisite view from the Castle, Her Majesty naturally speaks with rapture. Not even the rain, which continued throughout the following day, could rob it of its charm.

Next morning (Saturday, the 16th of August) a gleam of sunshine broke out as the Queen and Prince left Stolzenfels, accompanied by the King and Queen of Prussia, and the other Royal personages who were to see them on board, but before they had reached their yacht at Capellen, they had again to

writes to the Princess Imperial of Prussia (11th May, 1859) 'is the excellent Humboldt! You and Berlin will both miss him greatly, and I am glad that we had another opportunity of seeing him last summer. People of this kind do not grow upon every bush, and they are the grace and glory of a country and a century.' It must have been a great pain to the Prince to discover soon afterwards, how little he was understood by the author of the 'Kosmos.' In the scandalous publication by Varnhagen von Ense's niece of her uncle's private correspondence he is commented upon in two of Humboldt's letters in terms that disclose a pettiness of spirit which, like much else in the same correspondence, was the last thing to be expected in so distinguished a man The personal strictures in which Humboldt indulges, it cost the Prince no effort to forgive; but he was hurt that what he had said on a critical topic in the frankness of personal converse with Humboldt should have been reported, and —what was worse—inaccurately reported. 'I am severe only with the great ones,' Humboldt writes (27th February, 1847), 'and this man made an uncomfortable impression upon me at Stolzenfels. "I know," he said to me, "that you sympathise greatly with the misfortunes of the Russian Poles. Unfortunately, the Poles are as little deserving of our sympathy as the Irish."' These words no sooner appeared than they were laid hold of by the Press to found an attack upon the Prince. 'I read yesterday,' he writes to his eldest daughter (21st March, 1860), 'in the English papers the passages in Humboldt's letters, in which I am rather roughly handled . . . Uncourteous to him I believe I never was, *and most assuredly I never said* that the Poles and Irish deserved to be thrown overboard together, although it is quite possible we had some conversation about the similarities and faults in character of both nations. The matter is really of no moment, for what does not one write or say to his intimate friends under the impulse of the moment? But the publication is a great indiscretion. How many deadly enemies may be made if publicity be given to what one man has said of another, or perhaps even in many cases has not said?'

'tax the elements with unkindness.' The adieux were made under a violent shower of rain, which however soon ended, and the rest of the beautiful panorama of vine-clad slopes, of ruin-crested peaks, and picturesque villages which skirt the river as far as Bingen, was seen under that varied play of sunshine and cloud which sets off such scenery to the best advantage. The only drawback was that every hamlet and village along the route seemed to think it a point of duty to deafen the Royal party as it passed by all the guns and cannons they could muster.

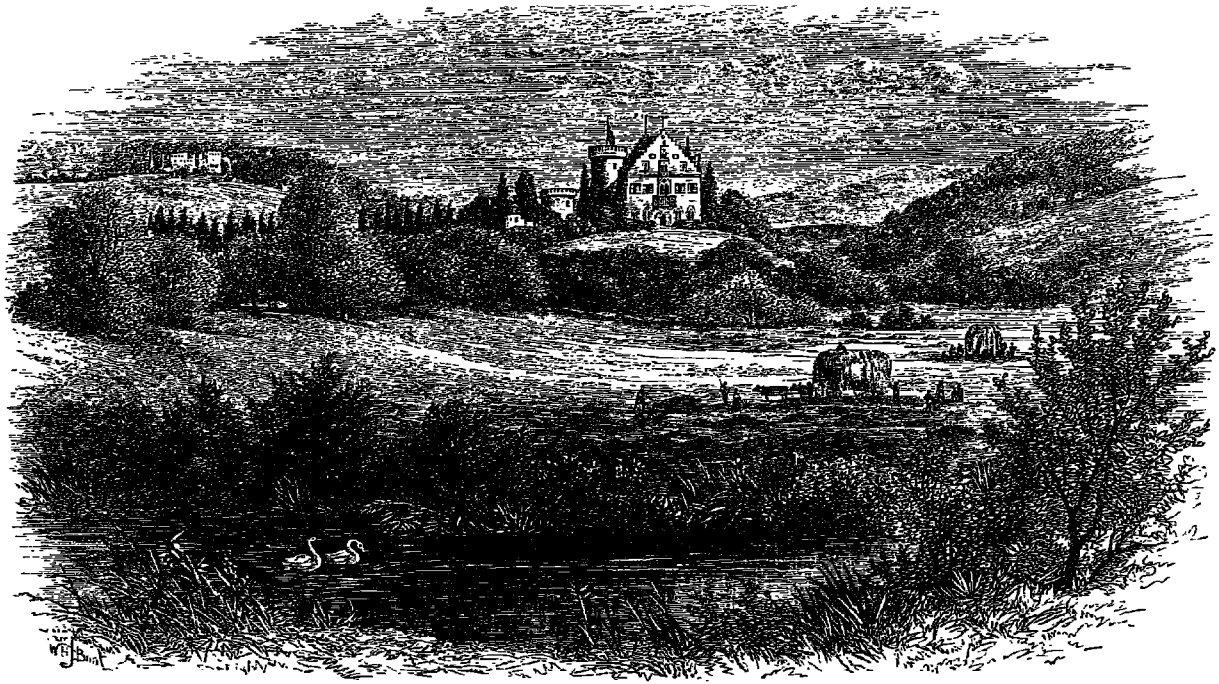
At Mayence the Queen and Prince were met by the Governor, Prince William of Prussia, his son-in-law Prince Charles of Hesse, and the Austrian Commander. The Austrian and Prussian troops were drawn up near the place of disembarkation; and after a march past of the men, 4,000 in number, and a dinner with Prince William, at his residence *Das Deutsche Haus*, the hotel was reached about 9 P.M. Soon after the Austrian and Prussian bands made their appearance, preceded by bodies of soldiers bearing torches, and producing, as they paraded the street under Her Majesty's windows, an unusually striking effect,—which was made more brilliant by such a serenade as could be given by no other military bands in Europe.

Among the more interesting incidents of the following day (Sunday) Her Majesty mentions having seen Madame Heidenreich, the lady who had assisted in bringing both the Prince and herself into the world, and who had seen neither of them since, and their future son-in-law, Prince Louis of Hesse, who is described as 'a very fine boy of eight,—nice and full of intelligence.' Here as elsewhere numbers of Royal personages thronged to do honour to the English Sovereign and her Consort. But next day set the travellers free for a time to pursue their route to Cologne with only their own suite. Starting at 7 A.M. in their own travelling chaise, and followed

in another carriage by Lord Aberdeen and Lord Liverpool, with the two ladies in waiting, the Queen and Prince posted, by way of Hochst, Frankfort, Offenbach and Seligenstadt, to Aschaffenburg. Here they were met by a body of the Bavarian troops, and one of the King of Bavaria's gentlemen, belonging to the Post department, with instructions to precede the Royal travellers on their route through Bavaria. Starting from Aschaffenburg, and traversing the beautiful woodland scenery of the Spessart, Würzburg and its magnificent Palace were reached through Langfurth, Schweinfurth, 'where the air was exquisitely pure and delicious,' and Rossbrunn. Everywhere the harvest was in full progress and gave life and interest to the landscape, the pleasure of which seems to have been not a little dashed by the spectacle, never welcome to English eyes, of the burden of the labour being borne by the women. At the entrance of the Palace, which greatly impressed the travellers by its vastness and the stateliness of its elevation, they were received by Prince Luitpold of Bavaria; and they found at their disposal 'an endless suite of very fine rooms,' which they were little able to enjoy, tired as they were with the long day's journey, and disconcerted, as even Royal tourists occasionally are, by the non-arrival of their luggage.

Next morning they resumed their journey soon after six, their suite having gone on some time before; and by one had reached Bamberg, by way of Kitzingen, Erbach and Windheim, through a finely-wooded country,—the picturesque dresses of the women, with their bright neckerchiefs, their green bodices, and quaint head-dresses, looking 'extremely gay and pretty.' The town itself, rich in stately buildings, the remains of the luxurious splendour of the Prince Bishops, did not long arrest the travellers. Many miles of road had to be covered before Coburg, the eagerly expected goal of the day's journey, could be reached. Soon after three Lichtenfels was reached, where horses were changed for the last

time before leaving the Franconian territory, and the day, which had been louring and showery, grew brighter and brighter. 'I began,' the Queen writes, 'to feel greatly moved,—agitated indeed in coming near the Coburg frontier. At length we saw flags and people drawn up in lines, and in a few minutes more we were welcomed by Ernest (the Duke of Coburg) in full uniform. . . . We got into an open carriage of Ernest's with six horses,—Ernest sitting opposite to us. The good people were all dressed in their best, the women in pointed caps, with many petticoats, and the men in leather breeches. Many girls were there with wreaths of flowers. We came to a triumphal arch, where we were received by the Vice Land-Director (the Land-Director being ill), who said a few kind words of welcome, to which I replied, all those who accompanied him standing on either side, and the good people receiving us in such a warm and really hearty and friendly way. We then drove to Ketschendorff, the pretty little house of our dear late grandmother, where we found uncle Leopold and Louise, who got into the carriage with us. Ernest mounted a horse and rode next to the carriage on my side, Alvensleben on the other. Then the procession was formed, which looked extremely pretty. At the entrance to the town, we came to another triumphal arch, where Herr Bergner, the Burgomaster, addressed us and was quite overcome. On the other side stood a number of young girls dressed in white, with green wreaths and scarfs, who presented us with bouquets and verses. I cannot say how much I felt moved on entering this dear old place, and with difficulty I restrained my emotion. The beautifully ornamented town, all bright with wreaths and flowers, the numbers of good affectionate people, the many recollections connected with the place,—all was so affecting. In the *Platz*, where the Rathhaus and Regierungshaus are, which are fine and curious old houses, the



THE ROSENAU

BIRTHPLACE OF H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT

clergy were assembled, and Ober-Superintendent Genzler addressed us very kindly,—a very young-looking man of his age, for he married Mama to my father, and christened and confirmed Albert and Ernest.'

The Palace was soon reached, and as the royal cortége approached it, 'numbers of young girls dressed like the others threw wreaths into the carriage.' The Duchess of Kent, the Duchess and Dowager Duchess of Coburg, and a crowd of relatives received the Queen as she alighted. 'The staircase was full of cousins. It was an affecting but exquisite moment, which I shall never forget.' One thought touched it with a haunting sadness—He was not there, the father of her husband, who had hoped so eagerly to welcome them to the ancestral home. This feeling was deepened, when, after a short interval, they drove to the Rosenau, a favourite seat of the late Duke's, which had been set apart for the Queen's and Prince's use during her stay at Coburg. 'Every sound, every view, every step we take makes us think of him, and feel an indescribable hopeless longing for him.'

No one who has visited the beautiful region in the heart of which Coburg lies, and of which not the least beautiful spot is the domain of the Rosenau, will be at a loss to understand the delight with which Her Majesty speaks of it in her *Journal*. But it had a charm for her beyond 'the soft magic of streamlet or hill,' for here he first saw the light, and spent the happiest years of his boyhood, whose companionship was her dearest blessing. It was the nook of earth, moreover, which above all others was beautiful in his eyes, and with his eyes she had long been in the habit of regarding it. 'How happy, how joyful,' are the words of Her Majesty's *Journal* (August 20), 'we were, on awaking, to feel ourselves here, at the dear Rosenau, my Albert's birthplace, the place he most loves. . . . He was so, so happy to be here with me. It is like a beautiful dream.' While in this mood the

emotion of the Royal guests was deepened by the music of some fine Chorales, sung by the singers of the Coburg Theatre, which greeted them as they rose. 'Before breakfast we went upstairs to where my dearest Albert and Ernest used to live. It is quite in the roof, with a tiny little bedroom on each side, in one of which they both used to sleep with Florschutz their tutor. The view is beautiful, and the paper is still full of holes from their fencing; and the very same table is there on which they were dressed when little.' In this state the rooms continue to be kept; and they are strongly suggestive of the austere simplicity of life in which the first years of the Princes had been passed.

A visit to the Festung, or fortress, which overhangs the town of Coburg, occupied the afternoon of this first happy day. The fortress, part of which dates from the twelfth century, had been admirably restored by the late Duke, and the interior arranged as a Museum and Armoury, which have since been largely augmented by the present Duke, and also by contributions from the Prince. Not the least interesting feature of the place is a room, which was occupied by Luther, and in which his chair and a portion of his bed are still preserved. 'From the bastions the view was glorious and most extensive, —Coburg below, with the Thüringer-Wald, and all the fine mountains towards Gotha in the background. The effect of light was peculiarly beautiful, and there is such a constant movement in the ground, it looked quite Italian. Then those rows of poplar-trees are so picturesque!' This charming feature in the Continental landscape, which Turner knew so well to use for the purposes of his art, we in England have been apt to overlook in our love for the hardier trees that have outlived the storms of centuries, and are the pride of our great landowners. The Prince admired them much, as an element in the picturesque, and planted them wherever he thought they would come in with effect.

An admirable performance of Meyerbeer's 'Huguenots' at the Coburg Theatre wound up the day. 'The good people,' the Queen writes, 'received us most kindly, and all sang "God save the Queen" adapted to German words. We came home at one.'

The next day a visit was paid to the Kalenberg, another of the Duke's seats, about three miles from Coburg, exquisitely placed on a commanding situation. 'A beautiful spot, but I prefer our dear Rosenau. Here I feel so at home. Lord Aberdeen,' Her Majesty adds, 'is pleased "beyond everything" with our dear little country, and thinks it beautiful, and the people good and comfortable.' In the evening the Queen and Prince drove to the Palace at Coburg, to hold a Reception. Here not only diplomatists and the officials and household of the Court were presented, but also deputations of citizens, merchants, and artisans: 'And they behaved so well, making much better bows than many of our people at the levees.' Everything was in good taste and well managed.

Next day was the Feast of St. Gregorius, which is celebrated in Coburg by a great Children's Festival. A procession of children, about 1,300 in number, from the different schools, was witnessed by the Queen and Court from the balcony of the Palace. 'All the children marched two and two into the courtyard, headed by their schoolmaster and a band, the boys first, and then the girls,—some in costume as shepherdesses, &c., and a little boy in court dress and powder —and the greater part of the girls in white with green. Three girls came upstairs and presented us with a very pretty poem to the tune of "God save the Queen,"—and which they sang extremely well. . . . The children then marched off as they came. After this we drove to the Anger, a meadow close to the town. Here were pitched two tents, decorated with flowers, and open at the sides, under which we were to dine. All the children were in front of us. We

walked round among them, and then sat down to dinner. A band of music played the whole time. . . . The children danced—and so nicely and so merrily—waltzes, polkas, &c.; and they played games, and were so truly happy,—the evening was so beautiful,—the whole scene so animated,—the good people so quiet, it was the prettiest thing I ever saw. . . . We were all much struck by the number of pretty children. At six we drove back to the Palace.' Here a great Ball carried the festivities late into the night, and it was half-past two in the morning before the quiet woodland shades of the Rosenau were reached.

A less stirring day succeeded, the weather still continuing beautiful; and it was passed in a round of visits to favourite haunts of the Prince, including the 'Kabinet' (now removed to the Festung), 'which is Albert's and Ernest's collection of stuffed birds, insects, minerals, all sorts of curious things, and autographs, to which he is (and I have helped) continually making additions.' Acquaintance was made with *Bratwürste*, the national dish of Coburg, which was pronounced to be excellent with the accompaniment of the native beer. The Duke of Meiningen (Queen Adelaide's brother), who had arrived in the morning, dined with the Royal party at the Rosenau; and a fine performance of Schiller's *Bride of Messina* at the Coburg Theatre rounded in the day with a strain of poetry and pathos, rich and penetrating, such as only 'the well-trod stage' can produce.

'*Sunday, August* 24.—Another beautiful morning. We again breakfasted out of doors. At half-past ten we drove with Ernest and Alexandrine—our ladies and gentlemen following—to Coburg, to the St. Moritz Kirche, a fine large church, in fact the cathedral of the town. The clergy received us at the door, and Genzler addressed a few words to me, expressive of his joy at receiving the great Christian Queen, who was descended from the Saxon Dukes, who were

the first Reformers, and at the doors of the church where the Reformation was first preached. The church was immensely full. . . . The service is much like the Scotch, only with more form—less prayer, and more singing. I think they sang three or four times, besides a *Te Deum* not sung by the congregation. But the singing of those beautiful Chorales by the whole congregation was the most elevating, impressive thing imaginable. . . . Genzler preached a fine sermon. He speaks so well and with such ease. The clergyman sings the *Segen* (Benediction) and one or two other things, and three clergymen officiated. We drove home at half-past twelve. The peasants, in their smart dress with its bright colours, looked remarkably well. The men, when in their best clothes, wear jackets with steel buttons, leather breeches and stockings, and a fur cap.' The afternoon's drive was through Schönstadt and Mönchroden to the Thiergarten, a preserve of the Duke of Coburg's, in which wild boars are reared. The features of the scenery recalled the familiar forests of Blair Atholo. 'The same fir wood, only spruce and silver firs, instead of Scotch firs—the same wild plants.' The resemblance is indeed striking to the woodland scenery of the Perthshire highlands, but probably even more to the highlands of Aberdeenshire, where in after years the Prince must often have been reminded of the Thuringian Forest which he loved so well. 'I cannot think,' the Queen writes, at the close of another day, 'of going away from here. I count the hours—for I have a feeling here which I cannot describe—a feeling as if my childhood also had been spent here.'

The same day the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar, who was absent from Coburg:—'The visit to the Rhine, all but the unceasing rain, was very pleasant, and our reception brilliant and hearty. Victoria seems to have pleased everybody, and is herself satisfied and extremely interested in all she sees or has seen. The mass of Royal personages, who

stream in from all sides, is somewhat oppressive, although their *empressement* cannot be otherwise than flattering. Here everything up to the present time has been a complete success—simple, hearty, and in good taste.'

Another beautiful day succeeded. 'Really the heavens bless our visit to this dear country. After breakfast Albert and Ernest went to town, where I fear they will be all day, and I have been writing ever since. . . . I sketched a lovely housemaid there is here in her costume, and three good little peasant girls—mere children. They are quite poor children, and yet so well dressed in nice clean things (their Sunday dress); and this is because they are peasants, and do not aspire to be more. Oh! if our people would only dress like peasants, and not go about in flimsy faded silk bonnets and shawls!' A brilliant day closed with 'a splendid sunset, red and gold and pink melting into a white and blue sky,' and in the cool of the evening another visit was paid to the Coburg Theatre, to see Gutzkow's historical comedy, *Der Zopf und der Schwert* ('The Cue and the Sword'), which was played with the finish and force for which the Coburg Theatre has a well-earned reputation. It was known to be the last time the Queen and Prince were to be there, and with the kindly feeling of the country 'the good people sang some pretty verses of farewell to "God save the Queen,"' before they left the house.

The next day (the 26th of August) was the anniversary of the Prince's birth. 'To celebrate this dear day in my beloved husband's country and birthplace is more than I ever hoped for, and I am so thankful for it. . . . I wished him joy so warmly, when the singers sang, as they did the other morning. Then the band played, and beautifully, a Chorale and Réveil, and several other pretty things; amongst others, the March and "O Isis and Osiris!" from the *Zauberflöte*. . . . The day was the finest and warmest and brightest summer day

imaginable, which is of good omen to dearest Albert.' Numberless gifts awaited the Prince, laid out upon a table dressed with flowers, arranged by the hands of the Queen herself with the assistance of the Duke and Duchess of Coburg. Nor were the friendly greetings confined to the members of the family circle. The Coburgers remembered well that it was the fête-day of their favourite. 'Some of the peasants came up in gala dress, two and two, preceded by music; the women many of them with wreaths on their heads, and the men's hats decorated with ribbons and flowers. The first couple came up to us, and the woman presented a wreath to my dearest Albert, and the man a nosegay to me, saying at the same time, in German, "I congratulate you on your husband's birthday, and wish that he may live for many and many a year, and that you may soon come back!" They danced, shouting (*jauchzend*) in that peculiar way they have here. . . . They waltzed and danced the polka extremely well.'

This fête was over by noon. In the afternoon the Queen and Prince walked out alone, 'down the steps below the plateau we breakfasted on, where there is a beautiful rock, with a small waterfall and a very pure stream; and then along the walk in the valley . . . . where the people were making hay. It was still excessively hot, but very fine. We met Lord Aberdeen here, and while Albert was talking to him, I sat down and drew. One or two of the women who were making hay came close to me, and said, as all the country people do here, "*Guten Abend*" ("Good even"), and, upon my replying something about the weather, one of them began to talk. They are so friendly, so good-natured, and so simple. The relation between them and their superiors is so pleasant. She had her two little children with her. I gave her some money, and she shook my hand for it. I don't think she the least knew who I was. From here we walked by the rock again, where Albert made me taste the excellent

water; and then we walked to the opposite side to see the little fortification which Albert and Ernest dug and made when they were children, and which has remained perfect. It is close to the little garden and to the inn.'[4]

Twelve years had passed since the Prince, then a boy of fifteen, last spent his birthday at the Rosenau. Memory and imagination must both have been busy with him on this day. The past had been brilliant and beautiful. What of the future? He could too well forecast the signs of the times not to see that days of storm for Europe, and perhaps for England, were not far off, and thoughts of how these were to be met were not likely to be absent from so thoughtful a brain, even while he looked into the kindly eyes that sparkled round the crowded board, when his health was given that day at dinner. The feeling of sadness, which in all such anniversaries is ever more or less consciously present, was deepened for the Queen and for himself by the thought that this was to be their 'last evening in this dear, dear, peaceful Rosenau.'

Next morning, at half-past eight, they left it 'with heavy hearts.' The road lay through a beautiful country. The Royal travellers, who were accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of Coburg, alighted for a moment at the Duke's shooting lodge at Rodach, where the Prince had often been when a child. 'Everywhere the peasants were drawn up in their smartest dress.' At Rodach 'girls dressed in white and green presented flowers and verses, and the clergyman said a few words.' Soon after, the Meiningen frontier was crossed, and here the same demonstrations were continued,—the

[4] As part of the system, which the Prince upheld as inseparable from sound education, of making the pupil put into practice what he has learned in theory, the Prince's own two eldest sons, while still boys, had also to construct with their own hands a fortress, small in size, but complete in all its details. All the work, including the making of the bricks, was executed by the young Princes' own hands. It remains, a creditable monument of their constructive skill, close to the Swiss Cottage at Osborne, which was used by the Prince as a museum and school of practical science and industry in the education of the Royal children.

houses covered with decorations, and the people in holiday array. At Hildburghausen the inevitable speech of the clergyman, 'very discursive and somewhat confused,' rather taxed the patience of the travellers; and here again were 'white and green ladies with flowers and verses—who literally bombarded us with flowers, so that we hardly knew how to save ourselves; and the little roguish street boys seemed to enjoy it.' At Themar, the next halting place, the same ordeal had to be gone through—a very confused speech from the clergyman, 'who called me "*Die herrliche Britten Königin*" in such a very extraordinary way that we had great difficulty to keep our countenances; again wreaths and verses presented, and white and green young ladies.' A short way out of Meiningen the travellers were met by the Duke of Meiningen, who accompanied them to the capital, where again the clergyman and the young ladies with flowers and lyrics awaited their arrival.

After dinner at the Palace, the journey was resumed. By six P.M., Schmalkald was reached, 'where there was an amazing crowd, and a very ridiculous postmaster. A little stream runs through the street, which has a very good effect. Soon after Schmalkald the most beautiful scenery begins,—fine mountains covered with spruce fir—like Scotland, but much more wooded, and then we have very little spruce fir; valleys and meadows, with little houses, and smoke rising from where the charcoal-burners are; so solemn, wild, and impressive,—and such pure, cool, mountain air. At Klein Schmalkald Ernest's territories begin. It was getting dark here, and still more a little farther on, where, on the top of the Thüringer-Wald, were a number of people. Herr von Stein made a very pretty speech. A number of peasant girls, prettily dressed and with caps, presented verses. There was a triumphal arch, and everything picturesquely arranged, and with great taste. From here we drove down a long but gra-

dual descent, with noble wooded mountains on either side, and all the people running after us. It was quite dark by the time we came to Friedrichsroda, which was prettily illuminated, and where all the miners were drawn up. We drove at a foot's pace to Reinhardtsbrunn, which is quite near, and where a number of people were assembled.' At this most picturesque of country seats the journey terminated for the day. Later in the evening a torchlight procession of the miners passed in front of the windows of the Castle, the quaint costume and the flare of the torches coming out with a very wild effect amid the deep shadows of the gigantic pines. 'We retired to rest at a quarter to eleven, but the clock and watchman kept me awake some time.'

Of Reinhardtsbrunn and its environs the Queen speaks with the enthusiasm which the beauty and the grandeur of the scenery, and the bracing purity of the air, could not fail to excite. 'The fine trees, with their great branches sweeping to the ground, and their deep rich green, the luxuriant flowers, the wooded mountains that surround the house, the piece of water in front, make it one of the most beautiful spots imaginable.' Next to the Rosenau, Reinhardtsbrunn pleased Her Majesty most of all the places she had seen, and she would fain have lingered for a few days among its sylvan glades. But this was impossible. The days set apart for the tour were rapidly running out; and in the afternoon the Queen and Prince were to proceed to Gotha, on a visit to the Dowager Duchess of Gotha, of whose devotion to the Prince mention has more than once been made. Her impatience could not brook even the delay of the few hours. Although seventy-four years of age, she appeared at Reinhardtsbrunn, some eight miles from Gotha, before breakfast. 'I hastened to her,' the Queen writes, 'and found Albert and Ernest with her. She is a charming old lady, and, though very small, remarkably nice-looking, erect and active; but unfortunately



very deaf. . . . She was so happy to see us, and kissed me over and over again. Albert, who is the dearest being to her in the world, she was so enraptured to see again, and kissed so kindly. It did one's heart good to see her joy.'

In the afternoon the Royal party entered Gotha. At the outskirts of the town they were met by crowds of people. 'The peasant women not only wear a different costume, but look quite different; have longer faces, are dark, and handsomer. As we came into the town, it was beautifully decorated with festoons of flowers and wreaths suspended across the road.' At Friedrichsthal, the Duchess Dowager's palace, everything had been arranged for the reception of her favourites with the utmost care and forethought. 'She has hung in our rooms all the pictures from her two palaces, as she thought we might like this, and in our bedroom is the original portrait of Albert and Ernest when children. . . . At eight we dined alone with her downstairs. Dear, kind old lady, her love, her adoration for my Albert is quite touching.'

The first visit next day was to the chapel, which formed the temporary resting-place of the Prince's father, until the mausoleum should be ready at Coburg, where he wished to be buried, and where he now lies. Next in interest to this were the rooms where he died. 'These are left just as they were at that sad time. The wreaths, which decorated his room for his birthday, are still there, and there is that sad clock, which stopped going just before he died. . . . We then went upstairs to the rooms where Albert and Ernest used to live, and which command a beautiful view across the town, over an immense space of country—very flat, but you see from the other side the mountains in the distance.' The Kunst Kabinet, or Museum, which abounds in objects of interest, historical and scientific, next claimed such brief attention as could be given, where so much had to be seen and done within

such limited time. On their return to Friedrichsthal the Queen and Prince found that the Grand-Duke of Weimar and his son the Hereditary Grand-Duke, who had arrived from Weimar, were awaiting them. A great *Schützenfest* had been arranged for the afternoon; and at two o'clock the assembled visitors, a goodly number, 'drove, quite in procession, to the *Vogelschiessen* (the Popinjay shooting) through the very pretty town of Gotha, in broiling heat. We went up to a fine room, a ball-room, just opposite the Schützenhaus, in front of which was a large platform, handsomely arrayed, where we all stood. In walking through the ball-room, a number of young (some pretty) ladies strewed flowers before us. When we were established on the platform, the procession began—first came the *Schützen* (riflemen), with their chief, the *Schützen-König*, wearing innumerable medals given by the *Schützen-König* of each year. After these came all the public officials (*Beamten*); eight peasants from each place, on horseback; and the women, in their best and various pretty costumes, in waggons all decorated with flowers and branches. I am sure 2,000 passed. It was extremely pretty, and to see them file off in the fields was quite a picture. The crowd was immense, and all so orderly, so well behaved. Many of the women wear caps with feathers, such as the children have, only very high. We then went to another platform, where a goblet I had won was brought me; and after this to the Schützenhaus, a small, hot room, and smelling strongly of tobacco, in front of which is the wooden bird on a pole. Uncle Leopold and all the Princes shot, and almost all hit it, but did not bring it down. We drove home at half-past four.'

In the evening a Court was held in the Palace; on returning from which the Queen had the happiness to find awaiting her the Baroness Lehzen, the governess and friend of her early years, who had arrived that afternoon from

Buckeburg, where she resided after leaving England until her death, at the age of eighty-six, in 1870. In the various meetings which took place during this and the two following days the Queen speaks in warm terms of the unchanged devotion shown to her by the Baroness, who was the same as ever, only 'grown much quieter,' the natural result of her life of entire seclusion.[5]

The next day (30th August) was devoted to an excursion in the Thuringian Forest—to whose beauties 'the bright blue sky, the heavenly air, the exquisite tints,' gave a crowning charm. The first halt was at Reinhardtsbrunn, 'which looked more beautiful, more delightful than ever.' From here the route lay through the most picturesque woodland scenery by way of Friederichsroda to Jägersruh, a favourite shooting lodge of the late Duke's. Tree, rock, and stream in the most varied combination, with here and there, through the over-arching green, views opening out into the extensive plains beyond as far as the Hartz Mountains, fed the eye with delight. 'What is so beautiful,' writes the Queen, 'is, that between the noble and solemn forest of silver and spruce firs you come to the greenest and most beautiful little vallies, overshadowed by these deep green firs, with here and there some beeches and oaks among them. These reminded us of Windsor—only the latter seems stiff and tame after this. And then the peeps you get down such heights, and the bursts of sunshine between the trees—were so beautiful.' Jägersruh is the very ideal of a *Hunter's Rest*, sentinelled as it is by stately firs that look like cedars, and looking down from a commanding height upon a wide stretch of distant plain.

[5] '*September* 12, 1870.—My dearest, kindest friend, old Lehzen, expired on the 9th, quite gently and peaceably . . . She knew me from six months old, and from my fifth to my eighteenth year devoted all her care and energies to me, with the most wonderful abnegation of self, never even taking one day's holiday. I adored, though I was greatly in awe of her. She really seemed to have no thought but for me . . . She was in her eighty-seventh year.'—*Extract from the Queen's Journal.*

Everywhere, within and without, were traces of the taste and handiwork of the late Duke, which suggested the thought, 'how it would have pleased him to have shown all this himself,' to those he loved so dearly. The main object of the day's excursion was a drive of deer in the old style, and for this a further point in the forest had to be reached. After a brief pause, therefore, the Royal guests resumed their drive along a road which had been improvised by the peasants for the occasion in two days, and in less than half an hour reached the spot selected for the sport of the day.

In the National Gallery is a picture by Velasquez (Philip IV. of Spain at a Boar-hunt), which gives a vivid idea of what the Queen was now to witness. A space had been cleared in the heart of the forest, and was closed in with canvas hangings. In the centre, covered with branches of firs, and decorated with wreaths of flowers and laurels, interwoven with the admirable skill for which the peasantry of this part of Germany are celebrated, stood a pavilion, which was destined to receive the distinguished visitors. When they had entered it, 'part of the canvas was let down, after the Duke's Chasseurs had given a peculiar cry, and a number of stags and hinds dashed into the enclosure.' Presently the firing began, and fifty-five head of game, thirty-one of them stags, were soon stretched upon the sward, while the music of a fine band mingled with the intermittent crack of the rifle-shots. *Battues* of this description, lacking as they do the elements of personal effort in the sportsman and of reasonable chance to the game, which alone justify the chase, can only be viewed as a barbarous relic of a period when cruelty entered largely into the pastimes of the great. It was natural, therefore, that the Queen, while struck by the mediæval strangeness of the scene, should record in her *Journal*, 'as for the sport itself, none of the gentlemen like this butchery.' It was

pleasant to turn from it once more to the beautiful woodland vistas, and the emerald meadows set in the heart of the forest, through which the homeward route lay under the shadows of the beautiful Inselberg, the highest mountain of the district. 'The day had been,' writes the Queen, 'and the evening was, more beautiful than any I remember, and the soft blue haze over the hills, as we left Reinhardtsbrunn for Gotha, perfected the charm of the scene by the delicate veil which it threw over it.'

A quiet Sunday succeeded this day of excitement, to be followed next day by fresh festivities and ceremonials. 'All Gotha was in turmoil betimes on account of the Liederfest, and we went upstairs after breakfast to see the procession walk round the Orangerie,—numbers from each town with their banners and excellent bands.' Princes and princesses, 'without number numberless,' had flocked to Gotha to pay homage to the Royal guests, and also to assist at the festival. 'Of these, we had a perfect drawing-room. . . . Their numbers were quite bewildering. At length we drove, in countless carriages, with all the *Hoheiten* (Royalties)—to the Fest, which took place in the Park, just opposite the Schloss. . . . There were crowds and crowds of people—all in such good humour, and so well behaved. We were stationed with our suites in a very large and beautifully arranged tribune, or pavilion decorated with flowers, &c., and opposite to us was placed the orchestra with many hundred singers. They sang beautifully—many fine German songs, also one of Albert's, "*Gruss an den Bruder*" ("A greeting to my Brother"), and one of Ernest's; and two—the last to *God save the Queen*,—with very pretty words for us. . . . The good people both at Coburg and Gotha are so proud, not only of my being married to one of their princes, but of my being descended from them.' A State dinner and ball at the Palace wound up the festivities of the day.

The end of this brilliant holiday was now fast approaching. One day more, and the journey to England must be begun. 'To feel,' writes the Queen (2nd September), 'that this is the last day here is too sad! I can't and won't think of it. . . . Another beautiful day. How fortunate we are. . . . I drove with Ernest and Alexandrine to the Park, where we got out and walked to the *Graber Insel* (Island of Graves). You are ferried over; and here in a sort of grove are the graves of Duke Augustus (Grandmama's husband), his father, Duke Ernest, and Duke Frederic, brother to Duke Augustus, and two little brothers. The three Dukes are in three separate places, but all close together, and completely covered with flowers, which has a pretty, peaceful effect. An old gardener called Eiserbeck, who has been there for many years, and is eighty years old, said that it is here that dear Grandmama (God grant, at a very distant day!) will be buried.'

Another visit was then paid to the beautiful Thuringian Forest by a new route, 'not so grand or splendid as those previously seen, but very fine. . . . The meadows along the road with the people making hay—the women in their costumes (many of the women are very handsome)—with the noble firs in the background, are beautiful.' With many a longing, lingering look at the pine-clad mountains, the Queen and Prince bade adieu to 'beautiful Reinhardtsbrunn, full of regrets at not being able to spend a week there.' Mute nature seemed to be in sympathy with their mood. 'It was exceedingly cold when we came home, and the mountains were overhung with clouds.' But, arrived in Gotha, there was no leisure for such wistful musings. A ball for the inhabitants given at the theatre, which had been arranged as a ball-room by boarding over the pit, was to wind up the public ceremonials of the Royal visit. About 2,000 people were present; and after two hours spent in a scene, which

every pains had been taken to make brilliant and attractive, the Queen and Prince bade a reluctant adieu to the kindly and courteous people who had greeted them with such cordial welcome.

Next morning broke in gloom, sad as the hearts of those who were about to part. 'The breakfast,' writes the Queen, 'with dear Grandmama, Ernest and Alexandrine was sad. Dear Grandmama was so grieved at the parting; her dear, kind face looked so plaintive. She adores my dear Albert, "*Mein Engel Albert, Mein Engel's Kind*" ("My Angel Albert! My Angelic Child!"), as she calls him. . . . When at last we were obliged to take leave, she clasped him in her arms, and kissed him again and again, saying, "*Gott segne Dich, mein Engel!*" ("God bless you, my angel!") in such a plaintive voice. She was equally kind in wishing me good-by, and said, "*Alle die Engel beschützen Dich!*" ("All angels guard thee!") . . . Poor dear Grandmama. God grant we may have the happiness of seeing her once more ere long, and that we may have as delightful and dear a family party again!' This was not to be. The admirable lady, who had loved the Prince with all a mother's fondness, and whose love he had requited with more than a son's affection, was to see him no more.

The Prince's brother, with his Duchess, accompanied their guests the first stage from Gotha. 'Here we had to take leave of those who had been so kind to us, who had done everything so well. . . . The way in which things were arranged was admirable; all the English were quite struck with it, and charmed with the whole dear little country.'

In fulfilment of a promise to the Grand-Duke of Weimar, the travellers halted at Eisenach. Here they were received by the Grand-Duke and the Hereditary Grand-Duchess, and driven to the Wartburg; which the Grand-Duke felt a natural pride in exhibiting as the seat of so many associations

interesting to a Protestant sovereign. It had not then undergone that thorough internal arrangement which makes it, as it now stands, a monument almost unique of what antiquarian knowledge and decorative skill can do to reproduce the aspect of a great mediæval mansion. The chief feature of interest then, as now, was Luther's room, with the table at which he translated the Bible, his wedding-ring, and the mark on the wall of the inkstand which he threw at the devil. From Eisenach the travellers pushed on to Fulda, where they passed the night. In the afternoon of the next day Frankfort was reached. Here the King of Bavaria, the accomplished but eccentric Ludwig I., was received by the Queen, and remained to dinner. Prince Metternich, who had come over from Johannisberg, was also a guest, and is reported to have been 'in unusual force.'

Next morning the journey was made by railroad from Frankfort to Biberich, from which a Rhine steamer took the Royal travellers down to Bingen, where they embarked on the Royal yacht the 'Fairy,' which carried them as far as Deutz, opposite to Cologne. 'Strange to say,' writes the Queen, 'the Rhine, fine as it is, had lost its charm for us all. First of all, the excitement of novelty was over—and then, we were spoiled by the *Thüringer-Wald*. Stolzenfels looked very well, and so did Ehrenbreitstein, and those fine *Sieben Gebirge*; but after passing Bonn, we went down below, and Albert read to me.' So true it is that, after all, 'the eyes are in the heart.' If that be far away, as here it obviously was, the fairest things are no longer fair, the grandest no longer grand.

Cheering despatches from Sir Robert Peel met the Queen at Deutz, giving assurance that things continued to go well both in England and Ireland. Home with its duties and the dear ones there now became the uppermost thought. But before it could be reached, a flying visit had to be made to

Eu, on which Louis Philippe had laid great stress for political reasons, as a set-off with his people to the German visit.

Antwerp was reached by the afternoon of the 6th, where the King and Queen of the Belgians awaited the arrival of the travellers at the station. The town had again put itself in holiday array, and when the travellers embarked in the evening, the quaint beauty of its streets and quays was made more beautiful by a general illumination; the Cathedral itself being lit up with red, blue, and white lights. 'We remained on deck,' writes the Queen, 'for a short while, and then retired to rest. Such a dream it seemed to be here again in our quiet cabin, in our own yacht, just four weeks after we first embarked in her. And full of gratitude do we feel for all, mingled with sadness at being so far away from my dearest Albert's lovely *Heimath*.'

It was the evening of the 7th before the state of the weather admitted of the yacht leaving the Scheldt. Next morning by nine it was off Tréport. The King had been on the look-out. Presently 'we saw a little steamer come close to us, and then stop; after which a barge came up to the yacht containing the King, Joinville, Augustus, Guizot, M. de Salvandy, General Athalin, and others. In three minutes the King was on board (now in uniform), and expressed in the warmest terms his delight and gratitude at our having come. It was a pleasure to see how pleased he was. . . . After going on a little farther in the yacht, we anchored and got into the King's barge with the two standards up, with the King, the Princes, Guizot, and the Admiral. Instead of going into the port, we went outside, and had to be dragged over the sands in a bathing-machine, which did very well; a number of poor men and women having to pull the boat up to the machine. The King gave me a most hearty welcome, when I set foot on shore; and a few paces on stood the Queen, who received me most kindly. Madame Adélaide and the Prince and

Princess of Salerno were also there—he, the Queen's brother —she, sister to the Emperor of Austria. . . . The crowd cheered us much and kindly, and the morning was splendid, but intensely hot. There were no authorities present like the last time, as we had before begged that all might be on a more private scale.'

On reaching the Château the Queen and Prince were ushered by the King into the Galerie Victoria,—a room which he had fitted up, in honour of Her Majesty's former visit, with pictures of its various incidents, as well as of those of the King's own visit to Windsor, and, among them, full-length portraits by Winterhalter of the Queen and Prince. Once more among the many familiar faces of the charming family circle, to which she was bound by so many ties—everything, writes the Queen, 'put me so much in mind of two years ago, that it was really as if we had never been away.' The King would not have the visit regarded as anything but 'a friendly call,' but not the less magnificent was his reception of his visitors. For their amusement he had brought down from Paris that morning the whole company of the Opéra Comique, ninety-four in number; and erected a large theatre for their performance in a tent at the lower part of the grounds. Here Boieldieu's lively one-act opera, '*Le Nouveau Seigneur*,' and Gretry's graceful '*Le Roi Richard*,' were admirably given.

Next evening about six, amid the blaze of a glorious setting sun, the King's barge put off again from Tréport. In it were the King himself, with his Royal guests, the Prince de Joinville, M. Guizot, Lord Liverpool, and Lord Aberdeen, and they were followed on board the Queen's yacht by the French King's suite. While Prince Albert went to show the Prince de Joinville the smaller yacht, the 'Fairy,' the King remained in conversation with Her Majesty and Lord Aberdeen. It was then he made use of the expressions, which

became afterwards of so much importance, and to which it will be necessary to recall attention hereafter, in speaking of the Spanish marriages. 'The King,' says Her Majesty's *Journal* of the same day, 'told Lord Aberdeen as well as me, he never would hear of Montpensier's marriage with the Infanta of Spain (which they are in a great fright about in England), until it was no longer a political question, *which would be, when the Queen is married, and has children.* This is very satisfactory. . . . When Albert came back with Joinville, which was about seven o'clock, the King said he must go; and they all took leave, the King embracing me again and again. We saw and heard the King land. The sun had set, and in a very short while there was the most beautiful moonlight, exquisitely reflected on the water. We walked up and down, and Lord Aberdeen was full of the extreme success of our whole tour, which had gone off charmingly, including this little visit, which had been most successful.'

Next morning at three the yacht was under weigh for England, 'the sea like a lake, and sky and sea of the deepest blue.' The heavens smiled on the close of this delightful excursion as, with the exception of the few wet days on the Rhine, they had smiled upon it throughout. Under the hot haze of an autumn noonday sun the Royal travellers disembarked on the familiar beach at Osborne. The dearest of welcomes greeted them, as they 'drove up straight to the house—for there, looking like roses, so well and so fat, stood the four children . . . much pleased to see us.'

CHAPTER XV.

THUS ended a tour, which had afforded the utmost pleasure to the Queen and Prince. 'We have brought back,' he writes to Baron Stockmar (29th September), 'the most agreeable recollections from our tour. Everything went off pleasantly and to a wish.' 'Swiftly beyond measure,' he had said in writing to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg a few days before, 'sped the delightful days we spent in my little fatherland (*Heimath*). Still we shall always find in remembrance rich amends for what has passed away so soon. . . . The children were in great glee at our return, and have made much progress in our absence in all good qualities (*Tugenden*), of which, the proverb falsely says, youth has none.'

The same feeling breaks out in very touching terms in a letter (16th September) from Her Majesty to King Leopold, in which we see how completely every thought of the splendour and enthusiasm of the reception, which had welcomed the English Sovereign all along the route, is merged in the delight of having viewed and grown familiar with the scenes in which the youth was cradled of him who is her 'dearest life in life.'

'I have a feeling for our dear "little Germany," which I cannot describe. I felt it at the Rosenau so much. It is a something which touches me so, and which goes to my heart, and makes me inclined to cry. I never felt at any other place that sort of pensive pleasure and peace which I felt there. I fear I almost like it too much. . . . The recollections

of the time spent in Saxony are engraven on my heart. It was one of the happiest times of my life, and to recur to it will ever bring me the greatest happiness. I must be thankful for having been allowed to see what I hardly dared to hope for.'

The state of affairs at home had not improved within the last six weeks. The rain, which had pursued the Royal tourists on the Rhine, had for many weeks, amidst thunder and storm, deluged the harvest fields of the British islands, and serious fears for the crops had spread from the farmers to the statesmen, whose anxieties such an event were so much calculated to increase. A new and terrible feature of apprehension was added in the reports which continued to crowd in upon them of a strange blight which threatened wholly to destroy the potato-crop in Ireland, and to produce serious ravages in England and Scotland also, where, if less relied upon by the population as a staple of food, it was an important source of wealth to the farmers. In the Prince's *Journal* for October entry upon entry tells of the prevailing anxiety, which culminates in the beginning of October in the words: 'Very bad news from Ireland—fears of a famine.' A crisis of the gravest moment was at hand, which had to be grappled with firmly and at once. Cabinet Councils were called, and four of these held in one week early in November, 'agitated England, perplexed the sagacious Tuileries, and disturbed even the serene intelligence of the profound Metternich.'[1] What engaged their deliberations could be no secret to the outside world. The Free Trade party saw in the disaster which had fallen upon the country an auxiliary more potent than the best eloquence of their best speakers; and Protectionists, who had long seen that to Sir Robert Peel they must not look as a leader, watched with apprehension for his next move in a

[1] *Lord George Bentinck, a Political Biography*, by the Right Hon. B. Disraeli, chap. ii.

policy which they must have for some time foreseen could only result in the abolition of the protective duties on corn.

How to avert the threatened calamity?—was the one question, which at such a moment was obviously paramount to every other consideration. True statesman as he was, Sir Robert Peel saw that the time for half measures was past. He would have met the immediate emergency by an Order in Council, at once throwing open the ports, trusting to Parliament for an indemnity; but at the same time he made no secret of his personal conviction, that this step could only be the prelude to a measure for the permanent abolition of protective duties. Weaker counsels prevailed, and the Cabinet Councils, to which all eyes had been directed, terminated without visible result. Parliament, instead of being called together, in accordance with the general expectation, was again prorogued.

If Sir Robert Peel's views on the subject of protection had undergone a remarkable change, not less so had those of the leaders of the opposite party. But there was this great difference in their position, that the Whigs were not hampered by pledges to uphold protection—pledges on the faith of which their rivals had been placed in power. Had the Ministry summoned Parliament, and proposed a suspension of the duties on corn, the Whig members must have voted with them. 'No party in Parliament would have made itself responsible for the obstruction of a measure so urgent and beneficial.' These words came with peculiar emphasis from Lord John Russell, who seized the opportunity afforded by the obviously wavering policy of the Ministry to deal them a vigorous blow, in a letter to his constituents (22nd November, 1845) from Edinburgh, where he was then staying. Abandoning his former creed, 'it is no longer worth while,' he added, 'to contend for a fixed duty. The imposition of any duty at present, without a provision

for its extinction in a short period, would but prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent.'

After such a declaration, which fell like fuel upon flame, it was impossible for the Cabinet to temporise. By this time the majority of its members had come round to the views of their leader, who, could he earlier have secured their co-operation, would probably not have hesitated to introduce such a measure as was pointed at by the great Whig leader. But it was now too late, when to do so would be universally ascribed to the desire to outbid the party who were the natural champions of Free Trade. 'The Government,' Lord John Russell had said in his letter, 'appear to be waiting for some excuse to give up the present Corn Law. Let the people afford them the excuse they seek.'

A Minister in the position of Sir Robert Peel, whose judgment went along with the policy announced by his adversary, had no alternative but to provide for him the opportunity of carrying it out. With this view, on the 5th of December, he placed his resignation in Her Majesty's hands.[2] Her Majesty at once turned to Lord John Russell as his natural successor, but he was still in Edinburgh, and it was the 11th before he reached the Royal presence. The Royal summons had taken him by surprise. The call, he felt, had come upon his party too soon. Before undertaking to form an administration, therefore, he must first consult his old colleagues,

[2] 'In the course of the interview with Her Majesty, which took place after my arrival at Osborne on the 5th of December, I trust that I satisfied the Queen that I was influenced by considerations of the public interest, and not by the fear of responsibility or of reproach, in humbly tendering my resignation of office. Her Majesty was pleased to accept it with marks of confidence and approbation which, however gratifying, made it a very painful act to replace in Her Majesty's hands the trust she had confided in me.

'I will not say more than that the generous support which I had uniformly received from Her Majesty and from the Prince, and all that passed on the occasion of the retirement, made an impression on my heart that can never be effaced. I could not say less than this without doing violence to feelings of grateful and dutiful attachment.'—*Sir R. Peel's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 222.

some of whom he knew did not approve of the course he had taken as to the Corn Laws. Without the support of Lord Lansdowne, as leader of the House of Lords, he could not hope to succeed, but he had doubts how far that nobleman would go with him on the great question of the day. By the 13th, however, the adhesion of Lord Lansdowne was secured. Still great difficulties existed, and five days more had elapsed before Lord John Russell was even able to inform the Queen that he accepted the task of forming an administration. So formidable were the obstacles to success which he apprehended from the state of parties, that his acceptance had for a time hung on the fact of his receiving a pledge from Sir Robert Peel to support a measure for the total and immediate repeal of the Corn Laws. Such a pledge, without having the measure actually before him, no statesman could give; and Lord John Russell was therefore compelled to rest satisfied with the assurance that Sir Robert and his friends would give their friendly support to his government in any reasonable measure they might introduce for the settlement of the question. But no sooner was this difficulty obviated, than another and more serious obstacle arose within the ranks of the proposed administration. Lord John Russell considered the presence in it of both Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston to be indispensable. But on vital questions of foreign policy these noblemen entertained the most opposite views. Lord Palmerston was ready to waive his claims to a seat in the Cabinet, but, if he joined it, he would do so only as the head of the Foreign Office. In this he was upheld by his friends; while Lord Grey adhered with equal firmness to his determination not to enter the administration with Lord Palmerston as Foreign Minister. Another consideration also weighed with Lord Grey. He conceived that Mr. Cobden, as the great leader of the Anti-Corn Law League, was entitled in the proposed distribution of honours to a seat in the Cabinet. This was refused, and the

office of Vice-President of the Board of Trade was proposed as the reward of Mr. Cobden's long years of struggle in a cause which he had now brought so near a triumph.

The difference could not be reconciled, and Lord John Russell, on the 29th of December, underwent, to use Mr. Disraeli's words (*Life of Bentinck*, chap. ii.), 'the mortification of confessing to his Sovereign his inability to serve her, and handed back with courtesy the poisoned chalice to Sir Robert.'

Lord John Russell had from the first anticipated failure as by no means unlikely, and he had told Her Majesty that in such an event Sir Robert Peel would have no difficulty in carrying on the Government. But not the less severe was the strain upon that statesman's courage and loyalty when appealed to by his Sovereign to resume the helm of affairs. The experience of the last year had taught him what he must be prepared to face in the coolness of former friends, the grudging support of unwilling adherents, and the rancour of disappointed political antagonists. Very significant is the brief record in the Prince's Diary of what occurred:—'Sir Robert Peel comes down in the afternoon, is very much agitated, but declares that he will not desert the Queen, and will undertake the government.'

In his *Memoirs*, Sir Robert Peel tells us:—

> 'I informed Her Majesty that, considering that Lord Stanley, and such of my colleagues as had differed from me, had positively declined to undertake the formation of a government, and that Lord John Russell having had the concurrence and support of all his political friends, with a single exception, had abandoned the attempt to form one, I should feel it my duty, if required by Her Majesty, to resume office.'—Vol. ii. p. 248.

With a great national calamity impending, which he believed was to be averted by carrying quickly through a measure that, as parties then stood, could only be so carried

through by himself, Peel was not a man to hesitate in making sacrifice of his deep-seated desire to retire into the ranks and leave the coming changes to be effected by those, who, if they had no more right than himself, so far as their antecedent history went, to claim the leadership in the present crisis, were not fettered, as he was, by party ties, and by former avowals of a creed which he had outgrown. But how much that sacrifice imported was well known to the Queen and Prince. They had been long accustomed to admire Sir Robert Peel, and those about him, for thinking only of what was best for the welfare of the State, with little care whether it was good for their party or not. But in this most trying hour they felt more strongly than ever that he had shown himself 'a man of unbounded loyalty, courage, patriotism, and high-mindedness.' These are Her Majesty's words, writing two days after his resumption of office. 'His conduct towards us,' she adds, 'has been, I might say, almost "chivalrous." I never have seen him so excited and so determined, and such a good cause must succeed.'

Entertaining such views of the Minister and of the situation, the result of the Ministerial crisis could not be otherwise than gratifying to the Queen and Prince. 'We are *seelenfroh* (glad in soul), as they say in Coburg,' the Prince writes to his stepmother (25th December), 'or still more frequently, *ganz fidel* (in high glee), that we have survived a Ministerial crisis of fourteen days' duration, and are now standing exactly where we stood before—upon our feet, whereas during the crisis we were very nearly standing on our heads.'

It is obvious from the following letter that Baron Stockmar, who had heard of Peel's resignation, was not prepared to give his friend credit for resolution to face the Free Trade difficulty, regardless of the outcry of the Protectionist party, or the sarcasms of his Liberal allies. The letter is interesting

as containing the expression of a conviction, which the Baron was never weary of inculcating, and which it was the study of the Prince's life to realise, that for the perfect working of the English Constitution the Sovereign should not merely set the example of a pure and dignified life, but should be potential in Cabinet and Council through a breadth of view unwarped by the bias, and undistracted by the passions, of party, and also, in the case of a long reign, through the weight of an accumulated knowledge and experience to which not even the most practised statesman could lay claim.

'Since the news reached me, that the Peel Ministry are to resign, I have been with you in thought almost without ceasing. The state of things produced by this change of Ministry is quite unlike anything that has hitherto been seen in the political history of England. It is only to be accounted for by the onward force (*Drang*) of the new epoch, to which England has for the last fifteen years conceded a place in her Constitution, and by the necessity which exists for continuing to use the worn-out wheels of the old epoch in the working of that force, in order that the old may not be all at once and altogether brought to a dead lock by the new. This produces a condition of things which compels statesmen to have recourse to artificial rather than to natural appliances, and hence the faults which Ministers commit as individuals and as members of a party produce much more serious results than they formerly did.

'To me this state of things seems altogether unhealthy, and one which it will be most difficult to ameliorate. In all my observation of the English State-machine, I have never been able to discover that balance of the elements of their Constitution, of which Englishmen boast so much. Previous to the Reform Bill, the theory of this balance was perhaps much more defective than it has been since; but the system worked better in practice then than it does now. It admitted

of a vigorous Government; and if in those days the Government acted foolishly, this was less the fault of the Constitution than of the incapacity of the Kings, and of the prejudices of the aristocracy, by whom Ministers were controlled.

'Since the theory of the Constitution has been brought more into harmony with the spirit and the wants of the age, its practical working has retrograded just as much as its theory has advanced. Whigs and Tories saw that from the moment the democratic element became so powerful there was only one thing which could keep this element within safe bounds, and prevent it from swallowing up first the aristocracy, and then itself. This one thing was the upholding and strengthening of the autonomy of the Monarchical element, which the fundamental idea of the English Constitution had from the first conceded to Royalty, and indeed concedes in theory up to the present hour. But, unfortunately, Peel has done nothing towards this upholding and strengthening; the most that can be said of him is, that he has not helped to make Royalty weaker than it was when handed over to him by Melbourne.

'In reference to the Crown the secret is simply this. Since 1830 the executive power has been entirely in the hands of the Ministry, and these being more the servants of Parliament—particularly of the House of Commons—than of the Crown, it is practically in the hands of that House. This is a distortion of the fundamental idea of the English Constitution, which could not fail to grow by degrees out of the incapacity of her Sovereigns rightly to understand and to deal with their position, and out of the encroachments on their privileges by the House of Commons.

'This perversion of the fundamental idea of the English Constitution is fraught with this great mischief for the State, that the head of the Ministry for a time can only be the head of a party, and consequently must only too often

succumb to the temptation of advancing the imagined interests of his party to the prejudice of the public weal. To counteract on the part of the Crown this injurious tendency must at the present moment be a difficult task, inasmuch as Ministers and Parliament will construe the legal powers of the Crown, not in accordance with the original spirit of the Constitution, but with the practice which has prevailed since 1830. Still, the right of the Crown to assert itself as permanent head of the Council over the temporary leader of the Ministry, and to act as such, is not likely to be gainsayed even by those who regard it through the spectacles of party.

'27th December, 1845.'

The Prince's reply must have been most welcome, for it gave Baron Stockmar the clearest assurance that the objects of his solicitude had advanced far in securing the very position before the country which he had set his heart upon their maintaining.

'Dear Stockmar,—I believe that the crisis, now past, has been a source of real advantage to the Crown, by producing a widely spread feeling, that amid all the general confusion and heat of party at least one person has remained calm and free from party spirit, this person being the Queen. The very Radical *Examiner* had a very remarkable article on the subject, in which it brought prominently forward the advantage for the country of the existence of a third power so free from partisanship.[3] Our travels on the Continent, too,

[3] The following is obviously the passage to which the Prince refers. It occurs in the *Examiner* of 27th December, 1845. 'In the pranks and bunglings of the last three weeks, there is one part which, according to all report, has been played most faultlessly—that of a Constitutional Sovereign. In the pages of history the directness, the sincerity, the scrupulous observance of constitutional rules, which have marked Her Majesty's conduct in circumstances the most trying will have their place of honour. Unused as we are to deal in homage to royalty, we must add, that never, we believe, was the heart of a

have made the impression general, that the *personal* appearance of the Sovereign in foreign countries secures the friendship of those countries for the English nation, and in particular, that to the personal friendship between Victoria and Louis Philippe is to be ascribed the maintenance so much desired of peace between France and England. These are certainly very cheering, if only moderate, strides in policy, domestic and foreign.

'Had we not also to effect the *moral dignity* of the Court? This basis has been secured. To my mind, the exaltation of Royalty is possible only through the personal character of the Sovereign. When a person enjoys complete confidence, we desire for him more power also and influence in the conduct of affairs. But confidence is of slow growth.

'The opening of Parliament will be very interesting, and many may be the storms that await us.

'Windsor Castle, 6th January, 1846.'

If, in taking back 'the poisoned chalice' of office, Sir Robert Peel was well aware how many were ready to mingle fresh rancours with its venom, he had at least the consolation of knowing that he carried with him the good wishes of the nation generally. The news of his resignation had been received with a feeling little short of dismay. Those who represented the great interests of the country in trade, manufactures, and finance, set little store by the considerations of party tactics which had brought it about. They looked back upon the state of things when Sir Robert Peel had entered upon office—at home a failing exchequer, depressed manufactures, crippled commerce, wide-spread social

monarch so warmly devoted to the interests of a people, and with so enlightened a sense of their interests.' The article of which this forms a part is in the brilliant and bitter style of Mr. Albany Fonblanque, and it is especially conspicuous for that rancorous injustice to Sir Robert Peel which its writer lived to regret.

discontent, Ireland verging on insurrection, in the East our Empire menaced, and our relations with France and America creating perpetual apprehensions of war, which the state of our forces by sea and land was not calculated to diminish. With this picture they contrasted the flourishing trade, the restored confidence, the ample Budgets, the sense of security at home and abroad, which had been brought about by skilful financial management, and by a Government firm, far-seeing, and efficient in all the details of its administration. For the loss of the presiding spirit, to whom these results were mainly due—and this, too, at a time when a question, the most important that had arisen since that of Reform, was pressing for solution—, it was felt that no successor, however eminent, could compensate. The tidings, therefore, that Sir Robert Peel had resumed the conduct of affairs were received throughout the kingdom with a general sense of relief; and the knowledge of this was no doubt present to Her Majesty's mind in speaking as she did with assured confidence of his ultimate success.

It was not the less certain, however, that, in the Prince's words, there were many storms ahead, the issue of which no one might venture to predict. One thing, at least, Sir Robert Peel must have clearly foreseen: the certain break-up of the party which he had organized, and had led triumphantly so long. We have seen (*supra*, p. 266) that he had for some time felt that it was slipping away from him. Their education had not kept pace with his. There was no time now, with famine imminent in Ireland, to bring them up to his level; and he knew that where he must now go they were not prepared to follow.[4] Some who were prominent in the Conser-

[4] 'We had ill luck,' Lord Aberdeen said some months afterwards to the Queen. 'If it had not been for the famine in Ireland, which rendered immediate measures necessary, Sir Robert would have prepared the party gradually for the change.'

vative ranks have doubted whether the Minister's position might not have been made clearer, and his own personal comfort secured, had he taken his party more into his confidence, by calling them together, and developing his intended measures and his reasons for them before launching them in Parliament. Many might thus have been conciliated who were either thrown into opposition or lent him a support that was chilled by distrust. A man of warmer and less reserved temperament would probably have taken this course, and spared no pains to carry his party cordially with him. But what he saw very clearly himself, he may have thought they ought also to have seen with equal clearness. In resigning office, as he had done, he had satisfied every claim which they had upon him as their leader. That his opinions on the subject of Protection had undergone an entire revolution was no secret. When, therefore, he reluctantly resumed his place as the only possible head of a strong Administration, he came back on terms wholly different from those which had placed him in power in 1841.[5] If his party had stood still in the meantime, events had not. The very measures which had strengthened their hold upon the country inevitably led up to the ultimate removal of all restrictions upon trade. The elements themselves had conspired to force on a settlement of the question, whether a tax should continue to be levied on the staple of food. What more natural, then, than for one, whom a sense of duty alone impelled to undertake a

[5] 'I resume power,' he wrote to Madame de Lieven, 'with greater means of rendering public service than I should have had if I had not relinquished it. But it is a strange dream. I feel like a man restored to life after his funeral service had been preached, highly gratified by such condolence on his death as I received from the King and our valued friend M. Guizot.' The condolence from the King of the French here referred to was conveyed in a letter to the Comte de Jarnac, his representative at our Court, which was communicated to Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen, and has been made public in a valuable Memoir of the former by the Count, published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, of 15th July, 1874.

task from which every personal consideration would have inclined him to recoil, to assume that his followers would appreciate the very exceptional circumstances of his position, and that they would be generous in their estimate of a policy, which he had satisfied himself would alone meet the exigencies of the case? If such was his belief, it must have been quickly dispelled. Even before Parliament met, the Press teemed with attacks the most bitterly personal, in which he was charged, not with mistaken judgment, but with treachery and dishonour. Were it not, to use the language of his great adversary in the coming struggle, that 'duty scorns prudence, and criticism has no terrors for a man with a great purpose' (Disraeli's *Lord George Bentinck*, chap. v.), the Minister might well have quailed before the storm of obloquy and reproach, of which this was but the prelude, which burst upon him immediately after the meeting of Parliament.

With the exception of Lord Stanley, who retired from the office of Secretary for the Colonies, in which he was succeeded by Mr. Gladstone, all the Members of the Cabinet gave in their adhesion to the measure for the Abolition of the Corn Laws. It was shadowed forth in the Speech delivered by Her Majesty in person at the opening of Parliament on the 19th of January, 1846. The Debate which ensued on the Address was enlivened by explanations as to the late Ministerial crisis. In the course of these Sir Robert Peel took the opportunity to vindicate his policy since 1841, in what Mr. Disraeli justly calls his best style, 'earnest without being solemn, and masculine without turgidity.' His concluding words left no doubt as to the terms on which alone he would consent to remain at the head of affairs:—

'The conduct of Government is an arduous and difficult undertaking. . . . It is no easy task to insure the harmonious and united action of Monarchy, Aristocracy, and a reformed House

of Commons.[6] These are the objects which we have attempted to accomplish, and I cannot think they are inconsistent with a pure and enlarged Conservatism. Power for such objects is really valuable; but for my own part, I can say with perfect truth that *even for these objects I do not covet it.* . . . The relief from it with honour would be a favour, not a punishment. But while honour and a sense of public duty require it, I do not shrink from office. I am ready to incur its responsibilities, to bear its sacrifices, to confront its honourable perils; but I will not retain it with mutilated power and shackled authority. I will not stand at the helm during the tempestuous night if that helm is not allowed freely to traverse; I will not undertake to direct the course of the vessel by observations taken in the year 1842. I will reserve to myself the unfettered power of judging what will be for the public interest. I do not deserve to be Minister of England; but while I am Minister of England I will hold office by no servile tenure; I will hold office unshackled by any other obligation than that of consulting the public interests and providing for the public safety.'

On the 27th of January, Sir Robert Peel developed, in a series of Resolutions, his scheme of financial policy, which included a total Abolition of the Corn Laws at the end of three years. The magnitude of the interests involved, the apprehensions of immediate loss and of possible ultimate ruin, which were honestly entertained by a powerful section of the community; the speculative uncertainty inseparable from so sweeping a measure; the soreness of a great party at finding itself deserted, as it thought, by its leader in a critical hour, and placed in a minority by the defection of those with whom they had stood for years shoulder to shoulder, introduced elements of passion into the long debate that ensued which a new generation might find it hard to

[6] Mr. Disraeli calls this 'a somewhat portentous confession for a Conservative Minister.' Why portentous? Is not this the abiding problem of British statesmen, especially since 1830? And of all statesmen, who in his time did more than Sir Robert Peel to secure this harmony and united action, and to indicate the principles on which it may be maintained for the future?

sympathise with, or even to understand. Such was the fevered temper of the Opposition that the presence of Prince Albert in the House of Commons during the Premier's Speech was construed into 'the unfair and unwise manœuvre of the Minister to give the semblance of the personal sanction of Her Majesty to the Government measure.'

'If,' said Lord George Bentinck, speaking on the twelfth night of the debate, 'so humble an individual as myself might be permitted to whisper a word in the ear of that illustrious and Royal personage, who, as he stands nearest, so is he justly dearest to Her who sits upon the throne, I would take leave to say that I cannot but think he listened to ill advice when, on the first night of this great discussion *he allowed himself to be seduced by the first Minister of the Crown* to come down to this House to usher in, to give *éclat*, and, as it were, by reflection from the Queen, to give the semblance of a personal sanction of Her Majesty to a measure, which, be it for good or for evil, a great majority, at least of the landed aristocracy of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland, imagine fraught with deep injury, if not ruin, to them—a measure, which, not confined in its operation to this great class, is calculated to grind down countless smaller interests engaged in the domestic trades and interests of the Empire, transferring the profits of all these interests—English, Scotch, Irish, and Colonial—great and small alike, from Englishmen, from Scotchmen, and from Irishmen, to Americans, to Frenchmen, to Russians, to Poles, to Prussians, and to Germans.'

To find what he had done from the impulse of natural curiosity dealt with in such terms was a rough intimation to the Prince of the jealous spirit with which even the semblance of interference with the freedom of debate is regarded by public men. That 'many moderate men on both sides' were, as Mr. Disraeli tells us, disquieted by the incident of his presence in the House was enough to satisfy the Prince that he had been better away. But while the heat of strong party excitement may account for, it can scarcely excuse the

imputation that he had allowed himself to be seduced by the Minister to come down for a purely party purpose.[7]

The Prince could not be otherwise than an anxious spectator of the struggle which had now commenced; neither could he be indifferent to the welfare of the statesman whom he knew to be toiling day and night for the welfare of the country, at the sacrifice of his own health and happiness, and maintaining his courage in spite of unexampled difficulties. On the 16th of February, 1846, he writes to Baron Stockmar:—

'Dear Stockmar,—Here we are in the middle of the Corn debate. Peel's opponents are 200 of his own party; he carries with him only 90 and 180 Whigs and Radicals. He is abused like the most disgraceful criminal, and the opinion is generally current, that, the measure once through, the Opposition and the hostile 200 will seize some opportunity of ejecting him by a joint vote. This would be a great misfortune. Peel shows boundless courage, and is in the best spirits; his whole faculties are roused (*er fühlt sich*) by the consciousness, that he is at this moment playing one of the most important parts in the history of his country, and with this before him says to himself, "The Minister who settles the Corn Laws is not so easily turned out."'

The respite of a few days' retreat to Osborne at the end of February from the agitation of public life was eagerly seized by the Queen and Prince. 'We shall go,' the Prince writes to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, 'on the 27th to the Isle of Wight for a week, where the fine air will be of service to Victoria and the children; and I, partly forester, partly builder, partly farmer, and partly gardener, expect to be a

[7] 'The Prince merely went, as the Prince of Wales and the Queen's other sons do, for once to hear a fine debate, which is so useful to all princes. But this he naturally felt unable to do again.'—NOTE BY THE QUEEN.

good deal upon my legs and in the open air.' The new house at Osborne was making rapid progress, and the estate was being laid out under the Prince's directions, with the practical skill as an agriculturist and the fine taste as a landscape gardener which never failed him. 'Albert,' the Queen writes from Osborne (3rd March, 1846), 'is so happy here—out all day planting, directing, &c., and it is so good for him. It is a relief to be away from all the bitterness which people create for themselves in London.'

In the disposition of gardens and ornamental grounds Bacon himself was not a greater enthusiast than the Prince. Windsor, Osborne, Balmoral are all monuments of his skill. By his open-air labours in this kind of work he not only preserved his health amid the unremitting labours of his crowded life, but he was at the same time able to gratify his conceptions as an artist, when the leisure to express them on canvas or in clay had long passed away. A passage in one of his letters to the Princess Imperial of Prussia (13th April, 1859) will best explain his feelings on this subject:—

'That you take delight in modelling does not surprise me. As an art it is even more attractive than painting, because in it the thought is actually *incorporated*: it also derives a higher value and interest from the fact that in it we have to deal with the three dimensions, and not with surface merely, and are not called upon to resort to the illusion of perspective. As the artist combines material and thought without the intervention of any other medium, his creation would be perfect, if life could also be breathed into his work; and I quite understand and feel with the sculptor in the fable, who implored the Gods to let his work descend from its platform.

'We have an art, however, in which even this third element of creation—inward force and growth—is present, and which has, therefore, had extraordinary attractions for me of

late years, indeed I may say from earliest childhood, viz., the art of gardening. In this the artist who lays out the work, and devises a garment for a piece of ground, has the delight of seeing his work live and grow hour by hour; and, while it is growing, he is able to polish, to cut and carve, to fill up here and there, to hope, and to love.'

Before the Prince returned to town, Sir Robert Peel's Resolutions had passed through Committee, and a Corn Bill, founded upon them, had been introduced. At each stage the breach with his former party grew wider and wider; and the Prince appears from the following letter to have viewed with obvious disquietude the state of confusion into which things were likely to be thrown, so soon as the settlement of the Corn Law Question should terminate the temporary alliance between the Minister and the Liberal party.

'Dear Stockmar,—We are in the midst of one of the strongest party conflicts, which is carried on by the aggrieved party with a bitterness, a fury, and want of common sense, which never perhaps had a parallel in history. Peel is the mark at which all shots are levelled, and of the 658 members of the House he has, all placemen included, only 112 followers, and of these the half *contre cœur*. This is sad, and makes everything very uncertain. Nevertheless, Peel has great majorities nightly. Still he is forced to avoid every question, which might array the Whigs against him, otherwise he is in a minority directly, for he is supported by them only in the Free Trade measure, and even there he gets side-blows not a few. I send with this one of his speeches, which is a real masterpiece.

'Buckingham Palace, 16th March, 1846.'

By this time Sir Robert Peel must have changed his opinion, that 'the Minister who settles the Corn Laws is not so easily turned out.' The party who were ready to assist

him in that object were not likely to forego the opening offered to their ambition by the determined resentment of his former followers. Within a few days after this letter was written, speaking on the Second Reading of the Bill, his language plainly showed his conviction that the downfall of his Ministry was not far distant:—

'I am not surprised to hear honourable Members predict to me that my tenure of power is short. Let these measures pass into a law. Suspend your indignation till then; and then it will be perfectly open to you to determine what measures you will adopt for the purpose of terminating my political life. . . . I assure you that I deplore the loss of your confidence, if I have unfortunately lost it; I deplore it more than I do the loss of political power. The accusations which you have preferred against me are on this account harmless, that I feel they are undeserved. . . If I could feel, if I could believe that I had been moved by corrupt motives and unworthy impulses, one-tenth part of the accusations you have levelled against me must have been fatal to my existence and my peace. You may think I have taken too great precautions against Irish famine; you are mistaken. Events will prove that these precautions were not unnecessary. The month of July will have established that these precautions were not superfluous.[8] Sir, when I do fall, I shall have the satisfaction of reflecting that I shall not have fallen because I have shown subserviency to any party. I shall not fall because I have preferred the interests of party to the general interests of the community.'

No remarkable tactics were necessary, as parties then stood, to select the measure for putting an end to the Minister's political life. But a Coercion Bill, which had been introduced early in the Session in the hope of checking the alarming increase of assassination in Ireland, afforded the opportunity for such a combination in the House of Commons as was sure to place the Government in a serious minority.

[8] The best commentary on this is the following entry in the Prince's Diary: '22nd August, 1846. Beginning of Irish famine.'

It had passed the House of Lords with the approval of the Whig leaders. In ordinary circumstances it would probably have been equally sure of success in the House of Commons. Interruptions of various kinds and a protracted debate so far delayed its progress there, that, by a singular coincidence, on the same day (the 26th June), on which the Corn Bill passed the House of Lords, the Coercion Bill was defeated in the Commons by a majority of 78. The incidents of that evening have been recorded in one of the most striking passages of Mr. Disraeli's Biography, to which reference has already been made, of the remarkable man who, with himself, had been mainly instrumental in bringing about this result. With the picturesque strokes of a master of imaginative description, he has shown us the Minister, as the Protectionists passed before him into the lobby—'the men to gain whose hearts and the hearts of their fathers had been the aim and exultation of his life.' We see him, grave and motionless, 'with his chin extended, as was his habit when he was annoyed and cared not to speak,' as the result of the division was conveyed to him, and by it he knew that his reign of power was for ever at an end. But the sympathies of the reader of our own days are not with the men who had their brief hour of triumph in what they regarded as a just retribution for falsehood to the ties of party, but rather with the statesman who, at the sacrifice of his most cherished feelings, had done his duty to his country and his conscience, and by the measure which provoked his defeat had established a lasting claim upon the gratitude of the nation.

Six days later (4th July) we find Sir Robert Peel writing to Lord Hardinge in India from Drayton Manor:—'Lady Peel and I are here quite alone, in the loveliest weather, feasting on solitude and repose; and I have every disposition to forgive my enemies for having conferred upon me the blessing of the loss of power.' (*Peel's Memoirs*, ii. 310). The Minister

had adopted the only course open to him after the vote on the Irish Coercion Bill. On the 29th of June he announced that his government only held office until the appointment of their successors. The great measures of commercial policy were secure, for which alone he would have consented to encounter the odium and torture of the last six months. In the general disorganization of parties, an appeal to the country by a dissolution would only have prolonged the state of suspense from which the industry of the nation had already suffered. Many of the counties were alienated from him, and Ireland, incensed at his Coercion Bill, would have returned a compact phalanx of Members pledged to oppose him. In such circumstances a dissolution would certainly not give him a working majority with which to face a new Parliament. 'Anything,' said the Minister, 'is preferable to maintaining ourselves in office without a full measure of the confidence of this House.'

While Sir Robert Peel might well turn with a sigh of relief from the cares of office, noble though they were, to the not ignoble ease of a 'statesman out of place,' it would have been strange, had not the necessity for parting with a Ministry, who had served their Sovereign with such signal ability and devotion, awakened in the Queen and Prince a feeling of profound regret. The pain, which to natures such as theirs could never be otherwise than considerable, of separating from those with whom they had grown familiar not merely in the anxious counsels of State, but in the intimacies of friendship, was augmented by the feeling that for a time at least one of the great parties in the State was broken up. That it would come together again sooner or later was certain, but that it should do so under the same leaders was not to be expected. When the time came for the Queen to receive the Ministers on their taking formal leave, the trial on both sides was severe. 'Yesterday,' Her

Majesty writes (7th July) to King Leopold, 'was a very hard day for me. I had to part with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, who are irreparable losses to us and to the country. They were both so much overcome that it quite upset me, and we have in them two devoted friends. We felt so safe with them. Never during the five years that they were with me did they ever recommend a person or a thing that was not for my or the country's best, and never for the party's advantage only. . . . I cannot tell you how sad I am to lose Aberdeen. You cannot think what a delightful companion he was. The breaking up of all this intercourse during our journies, &c., is deplorable. . . .[9]

'Albert's use to me, and I may say to the country, by his firmness and sagacity in these moments of trial is beyond all belief.'

[9] The feeling was reciprocal. In writing to the Prince Consort from Haddo House on 14th September, 1846, Lord Aberdeen says: 'I rejoice to learn that the marine excursion to Cornwall and Jersey was prosperous and agreeable. Although living contented in this remote district, I confess that in reading of Her Majesty's progress, I have sometimes wished to find myself on the Royal yacht, and even off the race of Portland!

CHAPTER XVI.

'Two hours,' Sir Robert Peel writes to Lord Hardinge in the letter already quoted, 'after the intelligence arrived that the Lords had passed the Corn and Customs Bills, we were ejected from power; and by another coincidence as marvellous, on the day on which I had to announce in the House of Commons the dissolution of the Government, the news arrived that we had settled the Oregon question, and that our proposals had been accepted by the United States without the alteration of a word.' The tidings awaited the Minister on his return from placing his resignation in Her Majesty's hands at Osborne. They might well be accepted as no slight consolation in the crisis of defeat, for they assured to his country the quiet possession of a magnificent tract of territory, and closed up a question which had more than once brought us to the verge of hostilities with America. Involving as the question did the disposal of the vast district lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, the omission to deal with it in the treaty between the two countries in 1783 had necessarily been productive of claims on both sides, which the pressure of emigration and the value of the country itself made every day more difficult to reconcile. 'By holding up a finger, war could at any time be produced about it,' Lord Castlereagh had said to Mr. Rush, the American Minister, in 1822.

Four years previously (October 20th, 1818) the two Governments had concluded a Convention, which left the

territory open to settlers from both countries for ten years, and this Convention had been renewed for a further limited term on August 6th, 1827. But as the number of settlers increased this state of promiscuous occupation became fraught with danger, to avert which some definite arrangement for the partition of the disputed territory had become indispensable. The first step towards this was taken by the American legislature in the form of a resolution come to by the Senate, and also by the House of Representatives, on April 23rd, 1846, that notice should be given to determine the existing Convention at the end of twelve months, on the ground that it had become 'necessary to release the territory from the evil consequences of the divided allegiance of its American and British population, and of the confusion and conflict of national jurisdictions, dangerous to the cherished peace and good understanding of the two countries.' The resolution urged upon the Governments of both countries the 'adoption of all proper measures for the speedy and amicable adjustment' of the existing difficulties and disputes. Seizing the opportunity afforded by the friendly spirit which had prevailed in the American legislature in coming to this resolution, Lord Aberdeen lost no time in transmitting to Washington a proposition which was at once adopted, and became the basis of the treaty (dated June 15th, ratified July 17th, 1846) which now regulates the rights of the two countries, and under which the boundary line between the English and American territory became the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, continued westwards to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of that channel and of Fuca's Straits to the Pacific Ocean.

While one great cause of uneasiness was thus laid to rest by the prompt and temperate action of Lord Aberdeen,

another, which had menaced our Indian Empire, had only a few months before been removed by the disciplined valour of British troops. Never had this made itself more signally felt than in the brilliant campaign on the Sutlej, which had been terminated by the decisive victories of Meance, Aliwal, Sobraon, and Chillianwallah. 'We have received glorious news from India,' says Prince Albert, writing to his stepmother on April 2nd; 'great victories, and what is still better, the prospect of a solid peace! But they have cost us much blood, and the lives of many meritorious and distinguished men.'

The new Ministry, under the leadership of Lord John Russell, was quickly formed. The difficulties which had proved fatal at the end of 1845 had been cleared away, and Lords Palmerston and Grey appeared in the Cabinet, the former as Foreign, the latter as Colonial Secretary. The Marquis of Lansdowne, as President of the Council, represented the Government in the House of Lords, Sir George Grey went to the Home Office, where an anxious future awaited him, and the Cabinet was further strengthened by the presence of the Earl of Minto (Lord Privy Seal), Mr. C. Wood (Chancellor of the Exchequer), Mr. Macaulay (Paymaster-General), Earl of Clarendon (Board of Trade), Lord Morpeth (Woods and Forests), Sir John Hobhouse (Board of Control), and the Earl of Auckland (Admiralty). The Earl of Bessborough went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, with Mr. Labouchere as Chief Secretary. Seats in the Cabinet were offered to three distinguished members of Sir R. Peel's administration, James, Earl (afterwards Marquis) of Dalhousie, Lord Lincoln, and Mr. Sidney Herbert, but declined.

The interval required for the re-election of such of the members of Government as were in the Commons was seized by the Queen and the Prince for a short holiday at Osborne. On May 25th, in the midst of the anxieties of this stormy session, another Princess had been born, and the agitation of

the last few weeks, with the certainty that many causes of serious disquietude, both at home and abroad, were actively at work, made this brief respite especially welcome. 'I long for you to be here,' Her Majesty writes to King Leopold on July 14th. 'It has quite restored my spirits, which were much shaken by the sad leave-takings in London of Sir R. Peel, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Liverpool, &c.' In the same letter the Queen urges her uncle to fulfil his promise of visiting England with his Queen in time for 'our christening on the 25th. . . . I am so very anxious that Louise [the Queen of the Belgians] should be present, as the child is Helène's [Duchess of Orleans] godchild, and Louise has never been present at any of our christenings.' This wish was not, however, to be realised. Political events detained the King and Queen of the Belgians at Brussels until some days after the baptism of the Princess, who was christened at Buckingham Palace by the name of Helena Augusta Victoria, the Duchess of Kent acting as Sponsor for the Duchess of Orleans, while the other Sponsors, the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz and H.R.H. the Duchess of Cambridge, were present in person.

A few days afterwards the Prince officiated at two important ceremonies, of the kind at which his presence had now come to be universally desired. Whenever any new institution was to be founded for the advancement of the comfort, intelligence, or welfare of the people, whenever any new work of imperial interest and value was to be thrown open, men's minds turned naturally to him, because it was well known that, while his heart was sure to be in warm sympathy with the enterprise, no one was better able to form a sound estimate of its merits. At no time was it a mere matter of form with him to give the sanction of his presence on occasions of this nature. Before doing so he was at pains to inform himself thoroughly of the nature and objects of the institution

or the enterprise. Once satisfied as to these, it was a pleasure to him, at any sacrifice of time or fatigue, to show the interest felt by Her Majesty and himself in whatever concerned the happiness and prosperity of her people.

In May of this year the Prince had laid the foundation stone of the Sailor's Home for the port of London; and he was now asked to perform the same office for the port of Liverpool. On July 30th he went there for this purpose. A magnificent dock, known as the Albert Dock, had just been completed, and its opening was timed to coincide with the Prince's visit. Starting from London at six A.M. and reaching Liverpool by half-past eleven, within an hour the Prince had embarked on the Mersey in the Royal yacht, the 'Fairy,' in order to make a survey of the river and port. The day was brilliant, and as the yacht steamed along either shore of the estuary, the Prince saw to the best advantage the gigantic works and the vast mercantile navy of that busiest of havens. Not a point was lost to his observation. 'He had often heard,' was his remark to Mr. Bramley Moore, the Chairman of the Liverpool Dock Committee, who attended him, 'of the greatness of Liverpool, but the reality far exceeded his expectations.' After opening the dock with the usual ceremonies, the Prince brought the enthusiasm of his hosts to a climax by proposing at the déjeuner which followed, 'Prosperity to British Commerce.' The Prince's dock, the largest in the port, was then inspected; visits were paid to the South Corporation and Bluecoat Schools, and a careful survey was made of the St. George's Hall, with which considerable progress had been made. Mr. Elmes, the architect, found to his delight that every architectural feature of novelty or importance which he would have wished to be noticed was appreciated and commented on by the Prince. At the docks and warehouses it had been the same. The Dock engineer, Mr. Jesse

Hartley, a man of the first eminence in his profession, was at once surprised and gratified by the technical knowledge of hydraulic engineering shown by the Prince.[1]

The Prince's labours for this crowded day were not yet over. A grand banquet in his honour still claimed his presence; but in the few minutes left him to prepare for it, he found time to write the following note to the Queen:—

'I write, hoping these lines, which go by the evening post, may reach you by breakfast-time to-morrow. As I write, you will be making your evening toilette, and not be ready in time for dinner. I must set about the same task, and not, let me hope, with the same result. I cannot get it into my head that there are 250 miles between us! I have done wonders of activity, as you will perhaps have learned from the papers by the time you receive this letter. The loyalty and enthusiasm of the inhabitants are great; but the heat is greater still. . . . I am satisfied that if the population of Liverpool had been weighed this morning, and were to be weighed again now, they would be found many degrees lighter. The docks are wonderful, and the mass of shipping incredible.

'I must conclude, and enclose by way of close (*schliesse*

[1] So close and practical was the Prince's interest in the details of the work that he requested that a sample of the granite-rubble masonry used in the docks, by the excellence of which he had been struck, might be sent up to him at Windsor Castle. These details are given on the authority of Mr. Robert Rawlinson, C.B., an intimate friend of both Mr. Elmes and Mr. Hartley, from whom he received them at the time. 'St. George's Hall,' Mr. Rawlinson writes, 'is a noble monument of the artistic skill of the young and gifted architect. The Liverpool Docks are among the finest specimens of hydraulic engineering in the world. The Prince was at home with such men amidst such works. To an architect he could talk as an architect; to an engineer, as an engineer; to a painter, as a painter; to a sculptor, as a sculptor; to a chemist, as a chemist; and so through all the branches of Engineering, Architecture, Art, and Science.' Mr. Elmes, the architect of St. George's Hall, did not live to see the completion of his own noble design. He died in 1847 at the age of 33; and the building was finished under the directions of Mr. Cockerell.

zum Schluss) two touching objects, a flower and a programme of the procession.[2]

'Liverpool, July 30th, 1846.
'7½ o'clock.'

The language of the Mayor in proposing the Prince's health shows that a just estimate of his character had already been widely diffused:—

'You need not be told,' he said, 'what zeal the Prince has always shown in promoting the best interests of mankind. You need not be told of the encouragement he has given to the fine arts—encouragement enlightened by his cultivated taste and judgment; but above all, you need not be told how promptly he comes forward to promote the worthiest and noblest objects, especially when benefits are to be conferred upon the humbler classes. His presence to-day is a magnificent proof of the interest he has taken in our welfare. . . We celebrate not merely the visit of his Royal Highness to gratify the desires of a loyal people; nor yet the fact that we are honoured in beholding the Consort of Her Majesty as our guest; nor yet that he comes to encourage mercantile pursuits, and to add lustre to mercantile speculations and enjoyments; but we celebrate also the fact, that he comes to forward an Institution designed to elevate the character and promote the welfare of our seamen, in order that our brave tars, whose marches are on the mountain wave, and whose home is on the deep, may find a haven when the perils of the ocean are past, to secure them against the still greater perils on shore.'

The Prince replied with his wonted happy talent of saying what was most apt in the fewest words:

'It was always a cherished wish of mine to visit this scene of commerce, and all I have seen to-day has far surpassed my

[2] The same day the Queen writes to Baron Stockmar, who was then in England: 'I feel very lonely without my dear Master, and though I know other people are often separated for a few days, I feel habit could not make me get accustomed to it. This I am sure you cannot blame. Without him everything loses its interest . . It will always be a terrible pang for me to separate from him even for two days; and I pray God never to let me survive him. I glory in his being seen and loved.'

anticipations. The object of my visit here was a work of charity—a work reflecting the greatest credit on your liberality and good feeling, as it manifests that you are desirous of promoting the comfort of those who, by constant toil and labour, are contributing to the prosperity which I have this day seen.'

The enthusiasm of the first day was more than rivalled by that of the second; and it found full scope for its display in an elaborate procession, in which the Prince joined, to the site of the proposed Sailor's Home. The proceedings were opened by an address from the Chairman of the Committee of Management, in which he detailed the objects and practical working of the Institution, which had been for some time in active operation, concluding with these significant words:

'Allow me most respectfully and most sincerely to congratulate your Royal Highness for having endeared yourself to the people of this nation, by associating your name with institutions formed for religious, scientific, and philanthropic purposes, by these means securing the triumphs of peace and the blessings of Christianity, and for having this day added to your well-deserved popularity.'

In a few pregnant words the Prince expressed his acknowledgments, and sympathy with the objects of the Home. The usual masonic ceremonies were then gone through, and he drove at once to the railway-station on his return to town, leaving behind him in this great centre of commerce, as he had done in Birmingham in December 1843, a profound impression of courtesy and nobleness, combined with great knowledge, and keen practical interest in all that concerns the welfare and progress of mankind.

The incidents of these two days were an agreeable episode in the midst of the political anxieties of the time. The precarious nature of the alliance, by which the new Government had effected the downfall of the Peel Administration, had already become apparent. Their first measure, a Bill

for the ultimate abolition of the differential duties on sugar, had been threatened with defeat. Assailed by Lord George Bentinck and his powerful body of adherents, it was supported by Sir Robert Peel and his friends, although at variance in many respects with their own views, because they were anxious to prevent a fresh change of Ministry, which they knew must follow upon an adverse vote. So certain, indeed, was this, that it was put prominently forward by Lord John Russell in closing the debate on the second reading of the Bill; and the prospect of a result, which, in the then state of parties, must have produced the most serious confusion and embarrassment, could not have been without its effect upon the final vote.

The present was no time for a fresh Ministerial crisis. It demanded, indeed, a strong Government, capable of giving undivided attention to the work of administration, and commanding the general confidence of the country. The troubled state of Ireland, of which the Whig party had made light when in Opposition, assumed a different aspect, when the responsibility devolved upon them of maintaining the public peace. Every day deepened the distress occasioned by the failure of the potato crop; the prospects of the coming harvest were growing worse and worse; and the reports of crime and lawless outrage became more and more alarming. Something must be done, and done promptly; and the Government found themselves constrained to ask from Parliament for a renewal of the Irish Arms Act. They were, however, destined to find themselves fatally hampered by their recent resistance to the measure for the same object, which the former advisers of the Crown had introduced upon the strength of the official information, of which they could now themselves appreciate the full significance. Although, therefore, their measure passed the second reading on August 7th, it met with so determined a resistance from some of

their most valued supporters, that, ten days later, Lord John Russell had to announce its withdrawal. The House, thinned in its members, and exhausted by a protracted session, was not in a temper to turn against the Ministry, as under the circumstances it might have done, this evidence of a wavering policy in a matter where indecision was the worst form of weakness. Sympathy with the prevailing distress overcame all other considerations, and they were ready to welcome the measures for its relief which were submitted, the same evening, by their leader; the main feature of which was a scheme of liberal grants from the Treasury to give employment on public works to the suffering population. Had the necessity been less urgent, and the session less near its close, the nature of the works to which these grants were to be applied would probably have been more carefully scrutinised. As it was, roads and bridges, which in Ireland were already both excellent and abundant, were specially indicated by the very terms of the Public Works Act. It was rapidly passed through all its stages; and in this way an expenditure, which, while alleviating the present distress, might have been applied to drainage, railway, or other operations of permanent advantage, was lavishly spent in destroying good roads by loading them with useless metal, and in making others where they were not wanted. Worse than all, a Government rate of wages so profuse was established, that men were drawn away from useful employments to do, with the listlessness of idlers, what had better never have been done at all. Even the tillage of the fields was neglected; and thus the measures taken to mitigate the evils of one famine prepared the way for another still more desolating and disastrous.

The session, eventful both in its personal incidents and as a great turning-point in the economical history of the country, dragged on to the 28th of August, when Parliament was

prorogued by Commission. The Court had retired to Osborne at the beginning of the month, with the King and Queen of the Belgians. The quiet life there was varied by yacht excursions to Portland, Weymouth, Dartmouth, and Plymouth, between August 18th and 25th; and to Jersey, Falmouth, St. Michael's Mount, and the Duchy of Cornwall, between September 2nd and 9th.[3] That part of the new house at Osborne which was destined for the occupation of the Queen and Prince had now been completed. On May 15th they slept in it for the first time; and the next day the Dowager Lady Lyttelton sends the following charming family picture to one of her correspondents:

'Osborne House, September 16th, 1846.

'. . . . Our first night in this house is well past. Nobody smelt paint or caught cold, and the worst is over. It was a most amusing event coming here to dinner. Everything in the house is quite new, and the drawing-room looked very handsome; the windows lighted by the brilliant lamps in the room must have been seen far out at sea. I was pleased by one little thing. After dinner we were to drink the Queen and Prince's health as a *house-warming*. And after it the Prince said, very naturally and simply, but seriously: "We have a hymn" (he called it a *psalm*) "in Germany for such occasions; it begins—" and then he repeated two lines in German, which I could not quote right, meaning a prayer to "bless our going out and coming in;" it was dry and quaint, being Luther's—we all perceived that he was feeling it. And truly, entering a new house, a new palace, is a solemn thing to do, to those whose probable space of life in it is long, and spite of rank, and health, and youth, down hill now. . . .

'I forgot much the best part of our breaking in, which was, that Lucy Kerr (one of the Maids of Honour) insisted on *throwing an old shoe into the house after the Queen* as she entered, for the first night, being a Scotch superstition. It looked too strange

[3] The details of these excursions have been published by Her Majesty in *The Leaves from a Journal.*

and amusing.[4] She wanted some melted lead and sundry other charms, but they were not forthcoming. I told her I would call her *Luckie*, and not *Lucy*.'

The hymn quoted by the Prince, and which is, in fact, an amplification of the last verse of the 121st Psalm, was, no doubt, one which appears in the Coburg *Gesang-Buch*. One of its verses runs thus:—

Unsern Ausgang segne Gott,
  Unsern Eingang gleicher-massen;
Segne unser täglich Brod,
  Segne unser Thun und Lassen:
Segne uns mit sel'gem Sterben,
Und mach uns zu Himmel's Erben.

God bless our going out, nor less
  Our coming in, and make them sure;
God bless our daily bread, and bless
  Whate'er we do, whate'er endure:
In death unto His peace awake us,
And heirs of His salvation make us.

[4] Lady Lyttelton must have been very ignorant of Scotch usages to be so much surprised by the throwing of an old shoe after the Queen. The practice is universal in Scotland on such occasions, and also when a bride leaves her home, when she often runs no small risk from the torrent of old satin and other slippers which is rained upon her head by the enthusiasm of her friends. The practice has of late years spread across the Border. When the Queen arrived at the new house at Balmoral for the first time in 1855, one of her old servants did what Miss Kerr had done at Osborne. To have omitted the ceremony would have been regarded in Aberdeenshire as of evil omen.

CHAPTER XVII.

Amid these pleasant excursions on summer seas, and the home-felt delight of entering upon the occupation of the beautiful building which had grown up under their own eyes, the Queen and Prince were not free from the disquietudes, which, as the Venusian poet has said, climb the stately galley's side and hover round the domed and gilded ceilings of the great.[1] Before their return from Jersey they had received intelligence which caused them profound pain, for it at once shook their faith in one to whom they had hitherto given their implicit confidence, and seemed to threaten the most serious consequences to the peace of Europe. The covert policy which the French Government had for some time been pursuing at the Court of Madrid had proved successful, and it had been formally announced there at the end of August, that the young Queen Isabella and her sister, the Infanta Louisa Fernanda, were to be married at the same time, the former to her cousin, Don Francisco de Asis, the Duke of Cadiz, and the latter to the Duc de Montpensier.

Under no circumstances could an arrangement, which might possibly place a son of Louis Philippe upon the throne of Spain, have been looked upon by the English Government as a friendly act. But what gave peculiar bitterness to the feelings with which the transaction was regarded was the fact, that it was in violation of a deliberate pledge spontaneously given to the Queen not many months before by King Louis Philippe at the Château d'Eu, and had been

[1] *Horace*, Ode II. 16.

concluded under circumstances wholly inconsistent with the professions of mutual frankness and sincerity on which the 'entente cordiale' between the two Governments had been based. While, therefore, it struck at the cherished friendship which had so long subsisted between the Sovereigns of England and France, it also implied a deathblow to the intimate relations which had hitherto been cultivated between their Governments with the happiest results.

The course of events has so altered the position of the persons and Governments chiefly concerned in the results of these Spanish marriages, that a question which agitated the Courts of Europe, and speedily involved most important political consequences, has already lost much of its interest. It is impossible to measure how much of the convulsions by which Spain has since been rent is due to the short-sighted and selfish policy by which these marriages were effected; and it would be idle to speculate on the different and happier aspect which the country might now have presented, had the marriage of the young Queen been arranged solely with a view to her personal happiness, and to securing for her the guidance and support of a husband of high intelligence and character. But this much is certain, that the laws of nature and morality can never be outraged, as they were outraged in this case, with impunity; and history contains no more instructive proof than the disastrous fruits of these marriages, that failure must sooner or later ensue, wherever the interests of a nation are sacrificed to dynastic considerations or to political intrigue.

So far back as 1840 the disposal of the hand of the young Queen of Spain, then a mere child, had become a question of interest to the Governments of this country and of France, whose intervention, under the *Quadruple Alliance* in 1834,[2]

[2] Between England, France, Spain, and Portugal, under treaty signed the 22nd April, 1834, for the expulsion from the Portuguese dominions of Don

led to the overthrow of the Legitimists under Don Carlos, and had thus been the means of securing her upon the throne. In a conversation with Lord Palmerston in Paris M. Guizot, in discussing the general aspect of European affairs, had said, 'The Queen will marry Cadiz, and then Montpensier will marry the Infanta.' To such a scheme England could obviously not assent. The Queen might die without issue, when the throne would devolve upon her sister, with the effect of establishing France as a predominating power in Spain. To the reasons urged on this ground by Lord Palmerston against M. Guizot's project, his only reply was, '*La Reine aura des enfants et ne mourra pas.*' The question assumed many phases in the course of the next few years, and the name of the Duc de Montpensier dropped out of the discussion, but M. Guizot appears never to have lost sight of his original idea, which, in one essential feature of his programme, he had reason to know was more than acceptable to the Orleans family.

The possibility of an even closer alliance had already been discussed. The Queen Mother, naturally anxious to secure the support of a great military power to a dynasty menaced by the claims of rival disputants for the crown, and which held its place upon the throne by a precarious tenure, had made proposals to Louis Philippe for a double marriage, that would have given the Queen Isabella to the Duc d'Aumale, and the Infanta to the Duc de Montpensier. Such an alliance, gratifying as it might be to the King's ambition, involved too serious risks to admit of its being entertained. Not the least of these would have been the alienation of England, whose friendship it was at that juncture the King's obvious interest to cultivate. The protracted struggles, in which England in the beginning of the last, and again in the

Carlos and Don Miguel, the two Absolutist claimants of the thrones of Spain and Portugal.

early part of the present century, had lavishly spent her blood and treasure to secure the independence of Spain, and the losses she had suffered from the close alliance between that country and France at critical periods of her history, were not likely to be forgotten. It could not be supposed that the English people would stand quietly by, while an alliance was cemented, which would expose them to similar hazards. Moreover, it was well understood, that when, so recently as in 1836, England had given her active assistance to the cause of the young Queen, she had done so, because she believed that, in strengthening the hands of the constitutional party, she was taking the most effective means for establishing the independence of Spain, and thereby preventing that country from again falling, as it had so often done, under the influence of foreign Courts. From that party a policy, dictated by purely national interests, might be expected; and in such a policy lay the best security for the maintenance of friendly relations with England. In the other States of Europe an alliance, which would have placed a French prince upon the throne of Spain, would also have excited extreme distrust. But its probable effect upon England must have had supreme weight in determining Louis Philippe's resolution to decline the proposal of Queen Christina, so far as the Duc d'Aumale was concerned. At all events the language which he uniformly held in all his communications with the English Government was, that he would hear of no measure, which should have the effect of placing any son of his upon the throne of Spain.[3]

As the price of this concession, he endeavoured to extract the consent of our Government to the stipulation, that the young Queen's choice of a husband should be limited to Bourbons descended from Philip V. of Spain. This was

[3] During the Queen's and Prince's first visit to Eu he expressed this in the strongest terms. (See *supra*, p. 181.)

in effect to say, 'The Queen shall marry, not as her heart and judgment prompt, but as the French Government dictates; Spain shall have, not the king best fitted to rule wisely, to reconcile the conflict of parties, to restore peace, to quicken industry, to make the country prosperous and happy, but some scion of the House of Bourbon, whose elevation to the throne may give lustre to the Orleans dynasty.' A pretension so fraught with injustice, so insulting to the dignity of the Queen and of the nation, could only lead to mischief; and it would have been better for all parties if England had declined to proceed further with the discussion of the question until it was withdrawn.

Such was the position of matters in 1841, when Lord Aberdeen became Foreign Secretary. Meanwhile the Queen Mother had indirectly intimated her desire that the hand of the young Queen should be given to a Coburg prince,—either the reigning Duke, Prince Albert's brother, or his cousin Prince Leopold, brother of the King of Portugal, and third son of Prince Ferdinand of Coburg. For various reasons the reigning Duke was certain to decline any such proposal. But much was to be said in favour of Prince Leopold. He was related to the French Royal family, as well as to the English, and in the same degree. He was a Roman Catholic, of the right age, active, intelligent, and good-looking; a man in short likely to make the Queen a good husband, and the country a good king. Politically, too, his relationship to the King of Portugal might have been of advantage in removing the bad understanding, which then existed between that country and Spain. If the question, Who should marry the young Queen, had been left entirely open, the choice would in all likelihood have fallen upon him. Such, at least, down to the last moment, was the conviction of King Louis Philippe and of M. Guizot. Indeed their defence of the unseemly haste with which the marriage of the young Queen

was forced on by them in 1846, is rested by M. Guizot upon the fact, that, 'whether the English Government desired it or not, the Coburg marriage had become probable and imminent.'

The English Government did not desire it, either then or at any other time. When the subject was first mooted to Prince Albert in December 1841, he put his views into writing in a Memorandum, which was submitted to Lord Aberdeen. In this he says, 'Lord Aberdeen has in my opinion laid down the right principle, that the Foreign Powers ought not to propose candidates of their own—ought not to intrigue and push for them—but that the choice of a future husband for the Queen ought to be left to the Spanish nation, and to the feelings of the Queen herself. If such a choice be made, they ought to support it for the tranquillity of Spain's sake, unless it be a choice which could threaten and endanger the balance of power in Europe.' After reviewing the various candidates, and what might be said for Prince Leopold, the Prince concludes, 'Still I have no wish to press my cousin, if he should not be asked for by Spain herself, or to sacrifice him, should he have no inclination to undertake so troublesome a task.'

If, consistently with the principle laid down by Lord Aberdeen, the selection of Prince Leopold had worked itself out by its own merits, neither the English Government nor Prince Albert had any reason to take exception to that result. But to have pressed his candidature was incompatible with the attitude of absolute neutrality, which from the first had been assumed by the English Government, in the conviction that the question was one purely and solely Spanish. From the very outset Louis Philippe had shown the most passionate opposition to the idea of a Coburg marriage, but this was not wanted to confirm either Prince Albert or the Government in the resolution, which they had taken on other grounds,

not to interfere directly or indirectly with the young Queen's choice.

More than this the French Government had no right to expect from them; still they did more. By a word of encouragement they might at any time have effected the Coburg alliance. So sincerely solicitous, however, were all parties on the English side to avoid a line of action which might give umbrage to the King of the French, that this word was resolutely withheld. That it was so withheld was also due to this, that the advisers of the Crown had come to the conclusion, that, as matters stood in Spain, it was better for both Spanish and English interests that Queen Isabella's choice should fall upon a Spanish prince. Prince Leopold was therefore in no sense the English candidate for the Queen's hand. So the French Government were most expressly told at every stage, and to the line of conduct which they had in the outset laid down for themselves the English Government uniformly adhered.

The principle which had been contended for by Louis Philippe, that the Queen's choice should be restricted to a Bourbon of the line of Philip V., was never admitted by Lord Aberdeen. His reply had always been, 'The Queen being absolutely free, and Spain independent, no other Power could pretend to dictate upon such a subject. If Spain, however, decided to accept a Bourbon within the limitations mentioned by the King of the French, Great Britain would readily acquiesce, all the more, because of the positive exclusion of his own sons pronounced by the King of the French.' As already said, it would have been better to have assumed a firmer attitude, and refused to discuss the question unless the pretensions put forward by the King were first withdrawn. But in his anxiety to maintain good relations with France Lord Aberdeen adopted a milder course, and in this way the King was emboldened to pursue his policy with more deter-

mined energy, and to press vigorously home the purpose, long since matured, but which had for some years dropped out of the discussions, of marrying the Infanta to the Duc de Montpensier.

The first announcement of this was given by M. Guizot, and afterwards by the King himself, to Lord Aberdeen, at Eu, on the occasion of the Queen's brief visit there in September, 1845.[1] Up to that time the subject of the Infanta's marriage had never been mentioned in the negotiations which had related exclusively to the marriage of the Queen.

'Her age,' says Lord Aberdeen in a letter to the Prince (9th October, 1846), 'rendered the question by no means pressing.' [She was then only sixteen.] 'Guizot,' Lord Aberdeen continues, 'mentioned to me the King's wishes and intentions, and said, "*Le Roi vous en parlera.*" All this took place on board the yacht shortly after the arrival of the Queen off Tréport. Accordingly the King very soon took me apart, and leaning over the side of the vessel entered at once into the whole subject. After strongly pressing the marriage of the Queen, he added, that he had thought of the Infanta for the Duc de Montpensier; but in order that there should be no cause for jealousy or uneasiness in England, he had resolved not to proceed with the match, until the Queen should be married and *should have children*. I expressed in general terms my satisfaction to the King; and especially that he should have so fully considered the impression which such an event could not fail to make in England.'

During the Queen's stay, Lord Aberdeen adds, the subject

[1] It appears from the account of the Spanish marriages given in Lord Dalling's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, which has appeared since this chapter was in print, that M. Guizot had mentioned the project to Mr. Bulwer in Paris in the summer of 1845, 'adding that it would not take place for some time, nor till the Queen had children, but that he wished Lord Aberdeen to be apprised of it.' 'I mentioned this conversation,' adds Lord Dalling, 'to Lord Aberdeen, on my arrival in England, who noticed the information by one of those "hums," accompanied by a thoughtful and half satirical smile, which, when anything was told him which he did not much like, was usual with him.'—Vol. 3, p. 215.

was more than once renewed between M. Guizot and himself. The French Minister urged him to promote actively the marriage of the Queen to the Comte de Trapani, a Bourbon Prince of the House of Naples, who was for the time the candidate favoured by the King. To this Lord Aberdeen, constant to his policy neither to favour nor oppose the marriage, provided the Spanish nation received it without repugnance, replied that it was impossible for him to do so, but that at the same time there should be no opposition on the part of England.

'With respect to the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier,' he continues, 'although I was very sensible of the value of the concession made by the King, I could express no opinion on the part of the British Government. The policy of the measure appeared doubtful; but as so much time must necessarily elapse before the marriage could take place, it might, perhaps, in the interval, admit of modification.'

The words of Louis Philippe to his Royal guests at Eu were, as already quoted (*supra*, p. 305), that 'he never would hear of Montpensier's marriage with the Infanta of Spain, until it was no longer a political question, *which would be, when the Queen is married, and has children.*'[5]

The British Government had from the first seen that the selection of a candidate for the Queen's hand among those to whom Louis Philippe sought to restrict the choice was attended with inherent difficulties, and might become, in fact, impossible. They were only four in number, Count Montemolin, the son of Don Carlos, the Count de Trapani, and the Duke of Cadiz and the Duke of Seville, the sons of the Infant Don Francisco de Paula. The first, himself a claimant of the throne, and recently in revolt against the

[5] In his *Vie de Peel*, p. 309, M. Guizot admits that the King had declared that, as to the marriage with the Infanta, '*il ne la rechercherait pour M. le Duc de Montpensier que lorsque la Reine serait mariée, et aurait des enfants.*'

Queen's government was not to be thought of. The idea of a marriage with the second was, as Lord Aberdeen by this time knew upon unmistakable authority, most unpopular in Spain. The Spaniards, who had ruled in Naples, were by no means disposed to accept a king from a people whom they held in contempt. There were personal objections to the other two candidates which bade fair to be insuperable. Both were understood to be distasteful to the young Queen. The Duke of Cadiz was charged with defects, which, if the charge were true, should have excluded him from consideration; while the Duke of Seville, obnoxious to the Queen Mother and the Government as the avowed chief of the Progresistas, their opponents, had made himself still more obnoxious by his personal arrogance, and was at this time actually in exile, and under suspicion of complicity in plots against the Government.

The persistent efforts of the French Government to force the candidature of Count Trapani having resulted in failure, as Lord Aberdeen had been assured by our Minister at Madrid[6] they must result, the thoughts of the Court and Government of Madrid again reverted to Prince Leopold.

'The Government of England could have no possible reason for pushing forward this alliance, the Government of France no plausible reason for opposing it. The only objection that could be taken was the family one of Louis Philippe, viz., that the proposed husband was not a Bourbon. But when the tranquillity of Spain, and the happiness of its Sovereign, and the concord of Europe, were all concerned in not carrying to an extreme a most absurd pretension of family pride, there was no irrational hope that this pretension would be ultimately laid aside, if Spain acted resolutely and asserted her rights. This was the Queen

[6] Mr. Henry Lytton Bulwer, afterwards Lord Dalling. The statement quoted in the text is taken from a Review of *Guizot's Memoirs* in the *Quarterly Review* for January 1868 (No. 247, p. 132), which is well known to have been written by Lord Dalling.

Mother's opinion. She determined, therefore, on addressing a letter, containing the proposal for a marriage between Queen Isabella and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, then at Lisbon; and she requested Sir Henry Bulwer to allow this letter to go, as her letters and the despatches of the Spanish Government could always go, by his messenger. She told him, however, what the letter contained. Sir Henry Bulwer would not refuse a letter from the Queen Mother to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. He would not argue against a Coburg marriage, because his Government had said that the Queen of Spain was free to marry whom she thought proper; but he said to the Queen Mother, what he had formerly said to Count Bresson, that a Coburg marriage was not an English one, and that he saw no reason for supposing that the English Government would support it as if it were.'

Lord Dalling, whose account of this incident is here given, no doubt acted with perfect loyalty to the principle laid down by his Government. But in the delicate position in which they were placed by the jealousy and suspicion of the French Government, they could not regard his privity under any circumstances to the conveyance of the Queen Mother's proposal to the Duke of Coburg as other than a grave indiscretion. There was subsequently great reason to doubt whether our Minister had not in fact been misled in thinking that the proposal was sincerely made, and whether it had not been devised in the hope of setting Louis Philippe free from his pledge to postpone the marriage of the Duke of Montpensier until the Queen had married and had children.[7]

[7] Lord Dalling appears to have remained to the last under the conviction that the Queen Christina had made the proposal in all sincerity. On such a subject certainty is obviously impossible. But facts were brought to the knowledge of our Government which justify the statement in the text; and Mr. Bulwer was too strongly impressed with the advantages to the Queen Isabella and to Spain of the Coburg marriage, and had too far committed himself by being privy to the proposal, to be quite an impartial judge. In his *Life of Lord Palmerston* (pp. 220–225) he states with great force how much he was moved by 'pity for the young Princess about to be so hopelessly sacrificed, by resentment to the haughty heartlessness with which this sacrifice was demanded, and

But however this might be, it was regarded as genuine by Mr. Bulwer, and it had at all events been kept a profound secret from M. Bresson, the French Ambassador there. No sooner was Lord Aberdeen informed by Mr. Bulwer of what had occurred than he communicated the intelligence to the French Ambassador in London, assuring him at the same time that the proposal was made without the knowledge or concurrence of the British Government, and would receive no countenance from them.

The letter, written in the month of May, was received by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg when he was contemplating an early visit to England. He therefore deferred his reply until he should have an opportunity of discussing the whole subject with those to whose opinion he naturally attached the highest importance. He arrived in England on the eve of the Ministerial crisis late in June 1846. Before an answer could be returned, not only had the opinions of his own family, including King Leopold, to be ascertained, but also those of the new Government. All were agreed that the proposal must be declined; and accordingly it was so declined, mainly upon the ground of the injury likely to result to Spain from a marriage contracted in antagonism to the views of Louis Philippe and his Government. Of this answer the French Government were made aware, and they were thus deprived of every pretext for questioning the sincerity of either the English Government or of the Coburg family. '*J'étais alors*,' says M. Guizot (*Mémoires*, vol. viii.

by interest for the fate of the Spanish nation itself, not to resist the preference professed by Queen Christina for the Coburg Prince.' So far he carries our entire sympathy with him. He is mistaken in saying that this marriage would have been in accordance with the wishes of our own Court (p. 222). Enough has been said in the text to show that this was not the case. In blaming Lord Aberdeen for making the proposal known to M. Guizot, Lord Dalling forgets that, in conformity with the uniform tenor of his conduct throughout all that had gone before, Lord Aberdeen considered himself under obligation to be as frank with M. Guizot as he believed M. Guizot to be frank with him

p. 236) '*et je reste aujourd'hui profondément convaincu de la parfaite sincérité du Prince et du Ministre dans leurs intentions et leurs paroles.*'

Meanwhile the French Government had not been idle. They were well aware that the chances of the Bourbon candidates were desperate. In a Memorandum sent by M. Guizot, towards the end of February 1846, to M. de St. Aulaire, the French Ambassador in London, and by him read to Lord Aberdeen, this is avowed.

'The Count de Trapani,' says M. Guizot, 'is greatly compromised:—1. By the demonstration which has been made against him. 2. By the fall of General Narvaez.

'The sons of the Infante Don François de Paul are greatly compromised: by their mistaken conduct; by their intimacy with the Radical and the antipathy of the Moderate party; by the dislike of the Queen Mother, and *of the young Queen herself.*

'The sons of Don Carlos are for the time out of the question: 1. By the opposition loudly proclaimed of all parties. 2. By their exclusion formally pronounced in the Constitution. 3. By their own proceedings, which have always been very remote from conduct which could alone give them a chance.

'The actual situation of the descendants of Philippe V. in the question of the marriage of the Queen of Spain has therefore become bad.'—*Mémoires*, vol. viii. p. 251.

To abandon the claim set up for the Bourbons would, in such a state of things, seem to be the natural conclusion. The Spanish nation and the feelings of the young Queen herself were both against it. But these, in the view of M. Guizot, were of no account. A descendant of Philip V. was 'his principle,' and, like other austere enthusiasts, he was resolved that it should be carried out, however others might suffer. He had already, on the 10th of December, 1845, written to M. Bresson at Madrid, that, if this principle were imperilled, the French Government would 'at once put themselves forward without reserve, and demand simply and

authoritatively the preference for M. the Duc de Montpensier.' Having got thus far, it was easy to imagine the peril which was to be followed by this course of action. That peril was found, or affected to be found, in some imagined intrigue for marrying Prince Leopold to the Queen. 'The English Government does not take any direct action towards this marriage,' says M. Guizot in the same letter, 'but neither does it take effective measures to prevent it.' The English Government had never undertaken to take active measures to prevent it, for such an engagement would have been directly contrary to their avowed determination to leave the whole question in the hands of the nation and the Queen. But it suited the purpose of M. Guizot to assume some implied obligation of this kind, and his motive for doing so soon became apparent. England held the plighted word of his Sovereign and himself, that no step should be taken which might have the effect of placing a French prince upon the throne of Spain, and some means must be devised to give a colourable pretext for breaking this pledge, manifestly incompatible as it was with the instructions sent to M. Bresson. The pledge on the French side had been explicit and unqualified, while it was equally clear that Lord Aberdeen had throughout declared as his part of the agreement, that the Queen was to be free to marry whomsoever she pleased, provided only he was not a son of Louis Philippe. However the French programme might fail, if its failure were not due to the direct action of the English Government, the French Government were bound by their engagement.

M. Guizot could not venture to suggest that England had been disloyal either in word or purpose. Not a hint of such a suspicion is given in the Memorandum above cited. It avows, indeed, that if the case of the Bourbons has become desperate, this is due to its own radical weakness. Alleged intrigues are dwelt upon, of which the Court of Lisbon is

said to be the centre, for marrying Prince Leopold either to the Queen or to the Infanta, and for which, if they existed—which, however, they did not—England was in no way responsible. This is followed up by the assertion of the monstrous proposition, that France shall consider herself absolved from all her engagements, either as to the Queen or the Infanta, if their marriage, either 'to Prince Leopold, or any other Prince not a descendant of Philip V., shall become probable and imminent.' 'We see only one way,' the Memorandum continues, 'of averting such a crisis. The English Cabinet must take active steps in concert with us, to press home the claim of one of the descendants of Philip V., *no matter which*, and to arrange his marriage with Queen Isabella, and in the meanwhile to prevent the marriage of the Infanta either with Prince Leopold or any other prince not a descendant of Philip V.'—*Guizot's Mémoires*, vol. viii. p. 254.

This Memorandum was read by M. de St. Aulaire to Lord Aberdeen, and it must have taxed even his most placid temper to listen to it without indignation. 'He had never lost an opportunity,' are his own words in a letter to M. Guizot of September 14th, 1846, 'of strongly protesting against the unjust and extravagant pretension of imposing a prince of any particular family as her husband upon the Queen and her people.' Herein was his answer to the proposal now made. The Memorandum was only read to Lord Aberdeen; and relying, as he was sure to do, on the good faith and honour of the King, he assumed that the contingency mentioned which was to set free the French Government from their engagements could only be one occasioned by the active agency of the English Government in pushing the claims of Prince Leopold. By this fear he knew the King of the French was haunted as by a nightmare; and he also knew that it was wholly without foundation. He appears at all events to have attached no importance to the Memorandum.

No copy of it was left with him, and he asked for none; he did not mention it in writing to Mr. Bulwer at Madrid; he said not a word about it to his successor, when the conduct of our foreign policy passed into Lord Palmerston's hands. Had he apprehended its full significance, or the use which was afterwards to be made of it, this could not have been the case. As it was, he appears to have confined himself to renewing his assurances to the French Government, that this country had no interest in the success of Prince Leopold, and to removing from their mind every suspicion that his pretensions, 'if, indeed, he ever entertained any such, but of which to this hour I am quite ignorant, were supported by the British Government' (*Letter to M. Guizot, above cited.*) 'I had very frequent explanations,' Lord Aberdeen continues, 'with the Queen and Prince Albert on the subject, and I well remember saying to Jarnac, that after what had passed the Prince could never speak to me again, if it were possible for him to engage in an intrigue for such an object without my knowledge.' With these facts present to his mind, Lord Aberdeen might be excused for allowing M. Guizot's Memorandum to pass without serious notice, which he could scarcely have taken without using such strong language as, except under extreme necessity, it was prudent to avoid.

That he considered the situation as in no way altered by what passed on this occasion, is apparent from the language of his subsequent despatch (22nd June, 1846) to the Duke of Sotomayor, where he says:—

'We have always denied, and still deny, the right or pretension of the French Government to impose a member of any family upon the Spanish nation as the husband of the Queen of Spain, or to control in any way the decision of a question so purely Spanish. . . . England has no objections to a descendant of Philippe V. as a husband for the Queen, provided such choice

should be conformable to the interests of her Majesty, and the interests of her Majesty's Government; but if it is not, she is to be actuated by a sense of her own dignity and interest; and if the French Government, which Lord Aberdeen cannot believe, should interfere with the independence which Spain in such a matter has a right to exercise, she will, without doubt, receive the warmest sympathy of all Europe.'

In the meantime the instructions of M. Guizot to M. Bresson had borne their natural fruits. The Count de Trapani disappeared out of the drama, and the Duke of Cadiz took his place as the French candidate. 'Cadiz and Montpensier' was the *mot-d'ordre* passed by M. Guizot to his representative at Madrid, who soon showed that he read the injunction unqualified by any restrictions. When the French Government had, according to M. Guizot's memorandum, constituted itself sole judge as to the 'probability and imminence' of a Coburg marriage, a zealous agent was not likely to feel any scruples in accomplishing the task which had been set before him. So successfully did he push his negotiations with the Queen Mother and the Government, that on the 12th July, 1846, he was able to announce to M. Guizot, he had obtained their consent to the immediate and simultaneous marriage of the Queen with the Duke of Cadiz, and of the Infanta with the Duc de Montpensier. For the King's consent to this arrangement, he announces that he had pledged himself, adding, 'This great, important, and indispensable simultaneity is not formally expressed in your letter of the 5th; but the commentaries and explanations of Desages and Glucksberg left me no doubt upon the point. . . . I am sure, if you sound your heart, you will there find contentment with having come to this resolution.'[8]

[8] This letter, with others found in the Tuileries after the fall of Louis Philippe, was published by the Provisional Government. It appears in the *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 180.

When Louis Philippe learned what had been done he was in dismay. Whatever may have been in M. Guizot's mind, the King at least had sanctioned no such arrangement. It was diametrically opposed to the wishes both of himself and the Duc de Montpensier, and their consent must be at once and formally disavowed. So he wrote (20th July, 1846) to M. Guizot, adding, 'How this is to be done is the only question to be considered; but I have never deceived any one, and I will not begin at this time of day to let anybody be deceived in my name.' In another letter to M. Guizot, written the same day,[9] the King says: 'It is indispensable that the Queen be made aware that Bresson was forbidden to say what he has said, and that the simultaneity is inadmissible. . . . I will not rest under the imputation of causing an engagement to be contracted in my name, which I am neither free nor desirous to undertake, and which I have formally forbidden.' If the disavowal were ever made, which there is reason to think it was not, M. Bresson was not recalled; but remained at Madrid to work out what in writing to the King a few days afterwards M. Guizot calls 'our actual idea, "Cadiz and Montpensier."'[10] 'Do not,' says the King in replying to this letter, 'in your letters to Bresson use that expression "Cadiz and Montpensier." It savours too much of simultaneity, and is disagreeable to all my family, whom it suits as little as it does me.'—(*Revue Rétrospective*, p. 185). These scruples M. Guizot's answer to the King (*ibid.* p. 186) shows that he did not share. His heart was set upon the object too intently to be now diverted from it. His principle he had satisfied himself was 'in peril;' and

[9] These letters are printed in the *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 182.

[10] Letter of M. Guizot to Louis Philippe (July 24, 1846), printed in the *Revue Rétrospective*, p. 184. Writing the next day (July 25), M. Guizot tells the King that this was not the right moment for disavowing M. Bresson, on account of what he had done. *Ibid.* p. 186.

reasons were soon found to remove the lingering scruples of the King.

Had Lord Aberdeen remained in office, this might not have been so easy a task. What excuse could be devised for breaking away from a solemn engagement with a Minister whose loyalty had been so recently and signally proved by his conduct in regard to the letter of Queen Christina to the Duke of Coburg? How that loyalty was requited has been shown in the proceedings of M. Bresson; but it is at the same time apparent from the language of the King in regard to it, that he felt himself bound by every tie of honour to keep faith with the English Government. He had also personal confidence in Lord Aberdeen. Lord Palmerston, on the contrary, whose defeat of the French Eastern policy in 1840 still rankled in the mind both of the King and M. Guizot, was the object of his settled distrust—a distrust which they were fully aware was more than reciprocated.

It was foreseen by the Prince that this state of feeling would create a new element of difficulty. He was strongly under the impression that the King would in time have come to see that his scheme of marrying the Queen to a Bourbon would not work, 'if Lord Palmerston's return to office did not create a kind of *point d'honneur* that it must be carried.' These words occur in a Memorandum dated July 15, 1846, in which, as was his wont, the Prince embodied his views of the Spanish question. 'A particular candidate,' the Memorandum proceeds, 'might be carried by us, but to what use would that be, but to increase the difficulties of the Queen in governing Spain, by estranging France?—difficulties which, God knows, are already great enough. It is clear, therefore, that it is our interest not to separate from France. Our position is a much better one, as we do not pretend to exercise any power over the Queen, nor do we prescribe any candidate, *neither have we any*. Our only wish is to see the

Queen happily married. We ought therefore not to depart from Lord Aberdeen's policy. Now comes the question. Will matters in Spain go on so as to allow this? . . . There is no doubt that Lord Palmerston's return to office has given hopes to the democratic party in Spain—that there exist traditional connections between the Whig statesmen and the Progresistas, and between the English press and the Constitutional party in Spain. Therein lies great danger, and that is increased, if France tries to consolidate a party under her colours, which she will be inclined to do. The two parties once at war in Spain, they cannot fail to embroil England and France. Seeing this, I have already warned, and shall not cease to do my utmost to counteract such danger. Is the King prepared to do the same?'[11]

On the side of Lord Palmerston no difficulty arose. He adopted frankly the policy of Lord Aberdeen, in full reliance upon the counter engagements entered into by Louis Philippe and his Government, and trusting that the solution of the question would be ultimately reached by the friendly co-operation of the Governments. Our Minister at Madrid was ignorant of the understanding which had been come to between M. Bresson and the Queen Mother at Madrid;[12] and the French Government continued to act in their communications with the English Government as if the whole question were still open. In this belief Lord Palmerston wrote to Mr. Bulwer on the 18th of July a despatch explaining the views of the new government on the two prominent questions, the marriage of the Queen and the political condition of the country.

'In regard to the first,' he says, 'I have not at present any

[11] This Memorandum, which is in English, appears to have been meant exclusively for the Prince's own use, in giving precision to his ideas on this important question.

[12] In England this only became known on the publication in 1848, in the *Revue Rétrospective*, of the letters above quoted.

instructions to give you, in addition to those which you have received from my predecessor in office. The British Government is not prepared to give any active support to the pretensions of any of the princes who are now candidates for the Queen of Spain's hand, and does not feel itself called upon to make any objection to any of them. The choice of a husband for the Queen of an independent country is obviously a matter with which the governments of other countries are not entitled to interfere, unless there should be a probability that the choice would fall upon some prince so directly belonging to the reigning family of some powerful foreign State, that he would be likely to connect the policy of the country of his adoption with the policy of the country of his birth, in a manner that would be injurious to the balance of power, and dangerous to the interests of other States. But there is no person of this description among those who are now named as candidates for the hand of the Queen of Spain; those candidates being reduced to three, namely, the Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and the two sons of Don Francisco de Paula. I omit Count Trapani and Count Montemolin, as there appears to be no chance of the choice falling upon either of them. As between the three candidates above mentioned, her Majesty's Government have only to express their sincere wish that the choice may fall upon the one who may be most likely to secure the happiness of the Queen and to promote the welfare of the nation.'

Lord Palmerston then proceeds to deal with the domestic policy of the Spanish Government in no flattering terms, as one of absolutism, force, and tyranny—a mockery of constitutionalism, which he expresses a hope may be abandoned by the return of the Spanish Ministry to legal and constitutional forms. He then concludes:—

'Her Majesty's Government are so sensible of the inconvenience of interfering, even by friendly advice, in the internal affairs of independent States, that I have to abstain from giving you instructions to make any representations whatever to the Spanish Minister on these matters; but though you will, of course, take care to express on no occasion on these subjects sentiments different from those which I have thus explained to

you, and although you will be careful not to express those sentiments in any manner, or upon any occasion, so as to be likely to create, increase, or encourage discontent, yet you need not conceal from any of those persons who may have the power of remedying the existing evils the fact that such opinions are entertained by the British Government.'

Had this despatch been meant for the eyes of the British Minister only, all might have been well. The mention of Prince Leopold as a candidate on the same footing with the other two, although superfluous, would have been harmless; and the discourse on the unconstitutional proceedings of the Spanish Government would have slumbered in the Minister's portfolio. *But a copy of the despatch was to be given to* the French Ambassador in London,[13] and knowing, as Lord Palmerston did, the wild fears of the French King about Prince Leopold, and the use which might be made at Madrid of his invective on the Government, prudence should have dictated the avoidance of both topics of offence. As it was, the despatch furnished the very opportunity for which the French Minister was waiting. The King's apprehensions overpowered his judgment. The whole tenor of the despatch showed that Lord Aberdeen's policy of neutrality was to be continued. Nay, the very despatch by that nobleman to which Mr. Bulwer was referred for his instructions had spoken of 'Don Enrique as the candidate who appeared to us the most eligible, because the most likely to prove acceptable to the people of Spain.' But the King could only see in it a design to overreach him. 'Not that I expected better from

[13] 'I showed the despatch to Jarnac,' Lord Palmerston writes to Mr. Bulwer on 16th August, 1846; 'I gave it him to take home with him and copy if he liked it, because to do so was the civilest way of conveying to the knowledge of Louis Philippe opinions about Spanish questions which I well knew to be at variance with his views.' Strange, that with his settled distrust of Louis Philippe Lord Palmerston should have given him the chance of putting opinions so unpalatable before the Spanish Government, leavened with such comments as the French Ambassador was likely to make.

Lord Palmerston,' he writes (July 25) to M. Guizot (*Revue Rétrospective*, p. 185); 'but I thought he would not so soon have thrown off the mask. My present impression is that we must return blow for blow.' In this mood of suspicion the persuasion was not far off that the Coburg marriage had become 'probable and imminent,' and that he was free to follow out the line of action indicated in M. Guizot's Memorandum of the 27th of February.

The King's Minister at once saw the advantage given to him by the other part of the despatch, and it was communicated without delay to the Court of Madrid. Queen Christina and her Government read in it the menace of a revolution fomented by England, and threw themselves more decidedly than ever into the hands of M. Bresson.

Little dreaming of the use which was being made of his despatch, Lord Palmerston continued his negotiations with the French Government in the belief that they were acting in strict accord with himself. He had from the first desired to see Don Enrique the husband of the Queen, as, being a Spanish prince, the least objectionable, on personal grounds, of the two brothers, and as a Bourbon acceptable to Louis Philippe. Lord Normanby, our Ambassador at Paris, was instructed to ask for the co-operation of France in carrying out this view, and M. Guizot, on the 27th of August, promised to write to M. Bresson next day to the effect 'that if the Queen of Spain should be induced to make choice of Don Enrique, such choice would be perfectly satisfactory to France.'[14]

M. Guizot, in making this promise, was well aware that events had in the meanwhile taken a shape at Madrid which made it worse than futile.

On the 8th of August M. Bresson had written to him, that the Queen Mother was determined on the marriage with the

[14] Despatch, Lord Normanby to Lord Palmerston, 28 Aug. 1846.

Duke of Cadiz. 'One only concession,' he adds, 'she asks of us; it is, to couple the marriage of M. the Duc de Montpensier with that of M. the Duc de Cadiz, so as to fortify, to give distinction by the one to the other, and to keep down the malcontents, and those who might otherwise oppose, by the brilliancy of our Prince's rank, and by the dread of France which comes at his back.'[15] And the concession stipulated for had already been made at the time when the French Government professed their willingness to co-operate with England in recommending Don Enrique.

On the 29th of the same month both marriages were publicly announced at Madrid, and the act of betrothal for the Duc de Montpensier was signed. These facts were communicated on the 1st of September by M. Guizot in person to Lord Normanby, and by the Comte de Jarnac to Lord Palmerston, by letter on the evening of the following day. This letter Lord Palmerston, who was with the Queen and Prince on their marine excursion to the South Coast, received at Penzance. On his return to town, he saw the Comte de Jarnac, when he heard for the first time of M. Guizot's Memorandum of 27th February, 1846, and was informed that the mention of Prince Leopold as a candidate, in his despatch to Mr. Bulwer of the 19th July, was regarded by the French Government as a departure from the agreement come to at Eu,[16] which, coupled with Queen Christina's proposal to the

[15] *Guizot Mémoires*, vol. viii. p. 304.

[16] Lord Aberdeen, in his letter to M. Guizot, disposed of this argument. 'It is true that Lord Palmerston may have enumerated Prince Leopold as one of the candidates for the Queen's hand; but, knowing as he did the direct overture made by Queen Christina to the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg when at Lisbon, it was impossible that he could do otherwise. Even if he named Prince Leopold first in the list, this does not by any means prove that he wished for his success. On the contrary, I should probably have done the same thing, although entertaining a decided opinion that English interests would be better consulted by the success of one of the sons of Don Francisco. This I really believe to have also been the opinion of Lord Palmerston. . . . I beg you to recollect the course which I pursued when Bulwer allowed him-

Duke of Coburg in May, had created the contingency of a 'probable and imminent' marriage with Prince Leopold, and liberated France from its engagements to England.

The Queen and Prince were greatly shocked by the intelligence. For the young Queen herself, whose feelings had been ignored, and for whom they could only foresee a disastrous future in an alliance forced upon her, as this had been, against her inclinations, they were moved with the deepest sympathy. The course of action adopted by the French Government, so contrary to the spirit of the '*entente cordiale*,' and so fatal to the future friendly relations of the two Governments, also filled them with anxiety. But there was a further element in the transaction which gave them inexpressible pain—the part played in it by the King. His apprehensions of a Coburg marriage, after all that had passed, if they were sincere, implied such distrust of themselves as was intolerable in a friend. Sincere or not sincere, they formed no justification for the breach of a pledge, which he had volunteered, and on the faith of which the British Government had acted throughout. 'The very danger,' to adopt the words of the Queen in a letter to King Leopold at the time, 'which the French declared would absolve them of their promise, viz., Leopold's marrying the Queen, was put an end to by the Queen's marrying Don Francisco! Why then join on the marriage of the Infanta?' Matters were made worse by the fact, that M. Guizot endeavoured to give the whole affair as

self, without my instructions, to be privy to the proposal made by the Spanish Government to the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. Instead of encouraging or promoting the success of the project, which might have been easily and effectually done, I instantly communicated the circumstance to M. de St. Aulaire, and repeated that the sentiments and views of the British Government had undergone no change whatever with regard to the Spanish marriage. I did all this with the knowledge and approbation of the Queen and Prince, and I am therefore entitled to say, that neither directly nor indirectly did the proposition on behalf of Prince Leopold receive the slightest encouragement or support from this country.'

much as possible the appearance of a political triumph over England. He had admitted to Lord Normanby that it would create a bad feeling there, adding, what the event proved to be a great mistake, 'but nothing that will last.'

Had all been clear, Louis Philippe, who was in constant and friendly correspondence with the Queen, would probably not have trusted another hand to convey the intelligence to Her Majesty. To her his pledge had been given, to her an explanation was due. The more satisfied he might be, that he had been set free from that pledge, the more eagerly might he be expected to seize the earliest opportunity to place before her the reasons which had influenced his conduct. Instead, however, of following this course, he was silent, and the following letter from Queen Marie Amélie to Her Majesty announced the approaching marriage of her son as a mere family affair, and as though it were of no political significance or importance :—[17]

'Neuilly, September 8th, 1846.

'Madame,—Relying on that friendship of which your Majesty has given us so many proofs, and on the kind interest which you have always shown towards all our children, I hasten to announce to you that a marriage has been concluded between our son Montpensier and the Infanta Louise Fernanda. This family event overwhelms us with joy, because we hope that it will ensure the happiness of our dear son, and that we shall find in the Infanta one daughter the more, as good, as amiable as those who have preceded her, and who will add to our domestic happiness—the only

[17] This letter, with the Queen's reply, and also the letter from Louis Philippe to the Queen of the Belgians, to be hereafter mentioned, were published in the *Revue Rétrospective*. They have thus become public property, and they are therefore printed in the Appendix (B) to this volume in the original French, together with the Queen's reply—also in French—to the Queen of the Belgians, which is now for the first time made public.

true happiness in this world, and which you, Madame, know so well to appreciate. I ask you, by anticipation, for your friendship for our new child, feeling sure that she will participate in all those sentiments of devotion and affection which we all feel for you, for the Prince Albert, and for all your dear family.'

After giving some details as to the health and movements of the French Royal Family, the letter proceeds—

'I am charged by the King to offer his affectionate and respectful homage to yourself, and his kind regards to Prince Albert. He hopes you have received his letters, and that the peaches have arrived in good condition. All my children also request me to offer you their respectful remembrances. Pray present my kind regards to Prince Albert. Embrace for me all your dear children, and accept the expression of the affectionate and unalterable affection, with which

'I am, Madame,

'Your Majesty's most devoted sister and friend,

'MARIE AMÉLIE.'

With what feelings this communication was received by the Queen and Prince it is unnecessary to say. It was impossible to accept the announcement on the footing on which it was professedly made. The marriage of the Duc de Montpensier to the heiress presumptive to the throne was as much a political question now as it had been when the King volunteered his promise at Eu. How much the King had lost by the triumph of his Spanish policy he could not fail to see by the terms of Her Majesty's answer:

'Osborne, September 10th, 1846.

'Madame,—I have just received your Majesty's letter of the 8th inst., and I hasten to thank you for it. You will perhaps remember what passed at Eu between the King and

my-self; you are aware of the importance which I have always attached to the maintenance of our cordial understanding, and the zeal with which I have laboured towards this end. You have no doubt been informed that we refused to arrange the marriage between the Queen of Spain and our cousin Leopold (which the two Queens had eagerly desired) solely with the object of not departing from a course which would be more agreeable to the King, although we could not regard the course as the best. You will therefore easily understand that the sudden announcement of this double marriage could not fail to cause us surprise and very keen regret.

'I crave your pardon, Madame, for speaking to you of politics at a time like this, but I am glad that I can say for myself that I have always been *sincere* with you.

'Begging you to present my respectful regards to the King,

'I am, Madame,

'Your Majesty's most devoted sister and friend,

'VICTORIA R.'

This letter, between the lines of which so much might be read, struck home. The King, sincerely eager for the friendship of England, as well as for the continuance of the affectionate confidence of our Queen which he had hitherto enjoyed, saw that he had imperilled both, and incurred the very imputation of want of good faith which he had in July dreaded that the unscrupulous zeal of M. Bresson might bring upon him. With the view of removing this imputation he lost no time in addressing a long letter to his daughter, the Queen of the Belgians, to be communicated to Queen Victoria. So intent was he upon his task that in a separate letter to his daughter he says, 'he had devoted to it without intermission and without regret three nights

till four in the morning, and this despite the outcry of the Queen, of my sister, and of all the family, who maintained that I was killing myself.' The scope of the defence put forward by the King has been already sufficiently indicated. His aim is to shift the imputation of want of sincerity from himself to the English Government, resting the burden of his proof upon Lord Palmerston's unfortunate despatch of July 19th to Mr. Bulwer. The distrust of that Minister had taken such possession of the King's mind that it even makes him so uncourteous as to express a surmise that the Queen was not acting upon her independent judgment, but saw the whole transaction '*par la lunette*' of her Foreign Minister. The letter will be found in the Appendix B (p. 503 *et seq. post*). Her Majesty's reply sufficiently explains itself.

'My dear Louise,

'I have read and re-read with the greatest attention the King's explanation of the recent events, and his statement of the motives which have governed the course of the French Government in regard to this unhappy Spanish affair, and I am deeply pained to have to declare that the perusal of his letter has in no way altered the opinion which I had previously formed, nor the pain I feel that these events should have occurred to trouble our cordial understanding [18]—an understanding which was so useful and so precious.

'The King accuses me of looking at these affairs only through the medium of Lord Palmerston. This accusation

[18] 'Lord Aberdeen,' says the Comte de Jarnac, 'was the first to make use of the phrase, "a cordial, good understanding," in the course of a conversation with me at Haddo, his Scotch country seat. It expressed faithfully the nature of the relations which a sincere mutual attachment between two eminent statesmen had created for the two countries. . . . Even now, after more than thirty years, the two nations may congratulate themselves upon the practice, adopted then for the first time in their history, of living in relations of mutual confidence and goodwill.'—*Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 15, 1874, p. 294.

has caused me profound regret, because I had every right to hope that His Majesty knew enough of my sincere friendship for him to be convinced that this friendship would inspire within me the most lively desire—I might even say, anxiety, —to see things simply as they are, and to put upon them the most favourable construction. It is not the least of my vexations, to have to acknowledge towards all the world, that the conduct of France is wholly contrary to the spirit of our "*entente cordiale*," and to the agreement formerly come to between us. I know that Lord Aberdeen takes precisely the same view as ourselves, and I believe that he has expressed as much to M. Guizot.[19]

'The one simple fact, which governs this whole affair, is, that the King declared that he would not give one of his sons to the Queen of Spain, and that on this declaration he based the right to limit the Queen's choice to the family of the Bourbons descendants of Philip V. We disputed and denied this right; still we consented to the choice being so restricted, and even promised to recommend it to Spain; and to this we have most scrupulously and religiously adhered, without swerving one hair's-breadth. What the King desired has taken place; the Queen married a descendant of Philip V., and of his descendants just that one whom he knew we regarded as the least eligible. The same day the King gives his son to the heiress presumptive to the Crown, not only without previous concert with us, but contrary to the pledge which he gave me at Eu last autumn, when with the question of the marriage of the Queen he for the first time mixed up that of the marriage of the Infanta. This pledge was, "that he would not think of this marriage, so long as it was a

[19] Lord Aberdeen had by this time written to M. Guizot in answer to his explanation of the affair:—'I do not comprehend why it has been thought right or necessary to abandon the engagement voluntarily entered into with me last year, and since frequently repeated, respecting the marriage of Montpensier.'

political question, and not until the Queen was married and *had children.*"

'The King endeavours to justify this departure from the course agreed upon between us, by assuming that we have pressed the candidature of our cousin Leopold, contrary to the engagement we had come under to His Majesty.

'I deny, in the most unqualified terms, that Leopold has ever been put forward as our candidate, either by the English Government, or by any member of the Coburg family. The fact is, that, if Leopold became a candidate, this was due to Spain alone; and to Queen Christina herself, who, whether acting spontaneously and in good faith, or as a trap for the English Minister at Madrid, took numerous steps to effect this combination, which she only abandoned at the last moment. Then, as throughout, our conduct has been invariably the same: we lent no countenance to this scheme, and we advised the Queen to seek among the descendants of Philip V. a candidate to her mind.

'Such, then, I assert, has been the line of conduct pursued by us; its straightforwardness and probity cannot be impugned.

'The readiness with which we made the French Government aware of the step taken by the Queen with regard to our brother, ought to have been a sufficiently clear proof of our sincerity. If the King had any suspicions on the subject, why did he not seek to clear them up before acting as he did? What is the good of talking of "*entente cordiale,*" if no pains are to be taken to come to a cordial preliminary understanding when a case of difficulty arises?

'As to Lord Palmerston's note to Mr. Bulwer of 19th July, 1846, from the terms of which the King labours to deduce a right to escape from the engagements which he had previously come under relative to the Duke of Montpensier, I have again gone over it carefully, and I deduce from it—

'1. That Lord Palmerston referred Mr. Bulwer to the last instructions which he had received from Lord Aberdeen, in which, in terms the most explicit and the most positive, he asserts the incontrovertible right of the Queen of Spain to marry what prince she pleases, even although he should not be a descendant of Philip V., adding, at the same time, what I give in his own words: "That we ventured, although without any English candidate or English preference, to point out Don Enrique as the prince who appeared to us the most eligible, because the most likely to prove acceptable to the people of Spain."

'2. That Lord Palmerston mentions Leopold among the candidates *merely* as a fact publicly known to all Europe.

'3. That Lord Palmerston concluded his note with an expression on the part of the English Government of the earnest hope, that the choice of Queen Isabella may fall upon whatever prince will be most likely to ensure the domestic happiness of the Queen, and the prosperity of the Spanish nation.

'Now, my dear Louise, to turn these simple facts into proofs that Lord Palmerston had departed from the understanding established between the French Government and Lord Aberdeen, it is necessary to do violence to the facts themselves in a way which my sense of justice will never countenance.

'I have, then, thoroughly considered the whole matter by myself, and looking at it with no eyes but my own, and I cannot possibly admit that the King is released from his pledge.

'Nothing more painful could possibly have befallen me than this unhappy difference, both because it has a character so personal, and because it imposes upon me the duty of opposing the marriage of a prince, for whom, as well as for all his family, I entertain so warm a friendship.

'My only consolation is, that as what is proposed cannot be carried out without producing grave complications, and without even exposing to many dangers a family whom I hold in high regard, they may even yet retrace their steps, before it is too late.

'Ever

'Your most devoted

'V. R.'

'Windsor Castle, September 27th, 1846.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

It was at first thought that, when the King of the French became aware of the effect produced in England by the announcement of the approaching marriage of his son with the Infanta, he might even yet agree to its postponement. To this conclusion Her Majesty points at the close of the letter just quoted; and the considerations which might fairly be presumed to weigh with the King were so obvious and cogent, that it was natural the hope should be entertained. But it was soon dispelled. The King looked upon the marriage as adding a special jewel to his crown; and the Minister, on whom he had come implicitly to rely, was in no mood to forego what he had vaunted as a great diplomatic triumph, to which he could point in proof of the emancipation of his Government from subserviency to British counsels, with which it had long been persistently taunted by the Opposition.[1] As a matter of precaution, an official protest against the marriage was made by the English Government; but this, as might have been expected, was disregarded, and on the 10th October the simultaneous marriages of Queen Isabella and of the Infanta were solemnised at Madrid.

Louis Philippe was under the delusion that the English

[1] 'The affair of the Spanish marriages is the first grand thing that we have effected completely single-handed in Europe since 1830.'—*Speech of M. Guizot in the Chambers*, 5th February, 1847.—*Ann. Reg.* 1847, p. 206.

were wholly indifferent upon the subject; and everywhere said, it was a private affair between Lord Palmerston and himself, and as such would entail no political consequences. He was soon undeceived. The affair had a moral as well as a political aspect. The English public might give themselves little concern about the one, but they could all appreciate and were little likely to be indifferent to the other. A transaction in which the feelings, affections, and happiness of two young Princesses had notoriously been treated with contempt, was an outrage to the public feeling of Europe, which was sure to be denounced in every home, 'unless indeed,' as Sir Robert Peel said, in writing (17th September) to the Prince, 'Queens and Princesses are disentitled to the sympathy and consideration which the meanest of their subjects have the right to claim.'

Nor were the probably fatal consequences of Louis Philippe's share in the transaction slow to be foreshadowed in the commentaries of the leading politicians of Europe. Lord Aberdeen, though he thought the marriage of the Infanta of very little importance to England and likely to prove in the end injurious to French interests in Spain, considered the way in which it was effected to have been unjustifiable. 'I lament,' he says, in writing (9th October) to the Prince, 'the coolness and estrangement which the circumstances attending it cannot but produce in our relations with France. I care very little for the marriage, but I feel deeply the breach of the engagement; and I am still unwilling to believe that Guizot, whether right or wrong, should not stand acquitted, at least to his own conscience, in the course which he has pursued.' Lord Lansdowne, writing to Lord Palmerston, expressed himself more strongly. 'Everybody,' he says, 'must now see the necessity of turning over a new leaf with Louis Philippe, whose conduct will not increase his real power, which after all *must be chiefly made*

up of opinion, though it may impede the relations hitherto subsisting between States.'

Prince Metternich, to whom the whole details of the transaction were well known, at once came to the same conclusion, and made no secret that he had done so. 'Tell M. Guizot from me,' he said, 'that one does not with impunity play little tricks with great countries. He knows I do not think much of public opinion; it is not one of my instruments, but it has its effect. The English Government have done their best to establish Louis Philippe in public opinion. They can withdraw what they gave, and I have always said the moment he loses that he is on the very verge of a war, and his is not a dynasty that can stand a war.'[2] Baron Stockmar, writing to the Queen (15th September, 1846), said, with prophetic truth, that the transaction would appear in the eyes of Europe 'a piece of selfish and wicked policy, from the scandal of which the King's fame will never recover. Nor will this be the only disastrous effect of his conduct, but your Majesty will see that, from the day of the marriage with the Infanta, the minds of all the leading Governments in Europe will again be filled with apprehensions, distrust, and jealousy against France, and that a new era will commence in their general policy with regard to that country.'

The English journals gave loud expression to the indignation which was felt throughout the country so soon as the facts became known. Their invectives were eagerly turned against Louis Philippe's Government by the Liberal party in France. The foreign Power, they urged, on whose friendship he had hitherto mainly rested, openly charged him with duplicity and breach of faith. This charge, too, had been incurred, not to strengthen France by alliance with a great

[2] This message is reported in a despatch from Lord Normanby to Lord Palmerston, 5th October, 1846, which also gives M. Guizot's reply to the bearer of it: 'But he don't mean to interfere at once, does he?'

and powerful State—which Spain had long ceased to be—but to advance the family interests of the Bourbons, and to further the Bourbon policy of absolutism and government by corruption, by which Louis Philippe had now for many years falsified the professions of the Citizen King. Thus had the King and his Government laid themselves bare to assault upon the side on which they were already most vulnerable.[3]

There were already sufficient causes of uneasiness in the state of Europe, without this new element of disturbance. The Queen's affection for the King of the French could not blind her to the wrong which had been done to Queen Isabella, or to the evils which it must entail upon her as a woman and as a sovereign. Willingly would she have found some extenuation for one with whom, and with whose family, she had been so long linked by many ties of affection; and in this sense Her Majesty was, as described by Baron Stockmar (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 451), 'from the first moment full of relenting and forgiveness.'[4] Not so the Prince. Merciless to himself in his sense of right and justice, he could not forgive the violation of either in another, and that other a king. 'The worship of truth and reason,' to use his own words,[5] 'had become every day more and more a matter of conscience with him.' What, therefore, Stockmar, in the same letter, says of him was true. 'He felt the blow as a

[3] A strange fatality attended on many of the chief actors in the Spanish Marriages. M. Bresson committed suicide at Naples in 1847. In 1848 the Duke and Duchess of Montpensier were refugees in England. Queen Isabella was deposed in September 1868. In March 1870, the King's brother, Don Enrique, a crack shot, was killed in a duel by the Duc de Montpensier, who is so short-sighted as to be unable to take a definite aim. The question of a successor to Queen Isabella was the proximate cause of the French and German War of 1870.

[4] 'There is but one voice here on the subject,' the Queen writes (13th October) to King Leopold; 'and I am, alas! unable to say a word in defence of one whom I had esteemed and respected. You may imagine what the whole of this makes me suffer. . . . You cannot represent too strongly to the King and Queen my indignation, and my sorrow, at what has been done.'

[5] In a letter of 19th December, 1847, to Baron Stockmar.

man must—as unrighteous in its essence, as a national insult in the shape it took, and as a personal wrong; for he could truly say, that he had postponed his feeling for his cousin to higher political interests, and, in return for this sacrifice, he had been met with ingratitude in its most offensive form. But the Prince,' adds Stockmar, 'like the Queen, takes the thing calmly, and will not suffer himself to be carried away into gratifying his bitterness of feeling, at the expense of the true and great policy of peace. No doubt great self-command will be called for from both Queen and Prince in this affair; for the French Government, so far from allowing that they have broken faith in the transaction, actually maintain, "We were entitled to do what we did, because you played a double part, and broke faith with us." One had need to be a saint, not to lose one's patience under such treatment.'

The Prince fully shared the opinion of Baron Stockmar, that the conduct of the King would give such a shock to his reputation throughout Europe, as could not fail to weaken the power of his government at home and abroad. Neither could its effect on our own foreign policy be a matter of indifference. The marriage of the Infanta was no cause of national quarrel; but the estrangement between the Governments must cripple for a time the policy of both, and this, too, at a crisis when the posture of affairs in Europe made it important that they should continue to act in vigorous concert. Who could tell, that at any moment some unforeseen political incident would not happen, which might show how seriously a sound European policy might be affected by the absence of the former good understanding between England and France? Nor, indeed, was such an incident long wanting.

The Polish insurrection in Silesia in the February of this year and the installation in Cracow of a revolutionary Provi-

sional Government, had been very quickly followed by a general defeat of the insurgents, and by the occupation of that city in March by the allied forces of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The Treaty of Vienna had provided, that Cracow should form 'a free and independent city under the protection of these three Powers.' In this way a feeble relic of the nationality of Poland had been kept alive, and the republic of Cracow had not without cause been long regarded with jealousy by the Northern Powers as a focus for the reactionary measures of the Polish party. When, however, the insurrection had been suppressed, they had rested content with merely stipulating that the militia of the Republic should not be reorganized, and that the town should be occupied alternately by the troops of the three Powers. Even this measure, though in some sense justified by the circumstances of the insurrection, had not unnaturally excited the suspicion of both England and France. They were of one mind, that the Treaty of Vienna must be upheld; and Lord Palmerston had, at the very close of the session, expressed a hope in the House of Commons, 'that the Governments of Austria, Russia, and Prussia would recollect that, if the Treaty of Vienna was not good on the Vistula, it might be equally invalid on the Rhine, and on the Po.' A reasonable hope, had the '*entente cordiale*' remained unshaken. But when the coolness between England and France became known, the Northern Powers resolved on a bolder line of action, and what had been only a partial outbreak, which had been rapidly and effectually quelled, was made the pretext for annihilating the last shred of Polish independence. On the 11th November an Imperial edict announced that the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna were revoked and suppressed, and that Austria, with the concurrence of the other protecting Powers, had annexed the city and territory of Cracow, and incorporated them as an inseparable portion of its Empire.

This extreme step was taken without previous communication with France and England, precisely as if these countries had been no parties to the Treaty of Vienna. Whatever difference of opinion might exist in England on the Polish question, or as to the penalty which Cracow had provoked by disturbing the peace of its neighbours, there could be but one feeling as to the open slight thus shown to the two constitutional Powers in Europe, and the mischievous effect of the high-handed measure of the allied Powers at a time when the pent-up forces of popular opinion against despotic governments were already threatening to break forth into revolution. Here was again the old law of the strongest put into action, and this in open violation of that Treaty to which, at other times, and when it suited their own ends, the same Governments were prompt to appeal. And not only were the reasons put forward for the extinction of the Republic inadequate to justify so violent a measure, but they also contained an avowal of alarm, which, whether sincere or not, said little for the political wisdom of those who drew them up. How precarious must be the position in respect to their own subjects of three great dynasties, if the existence of Cracow as an independent state was sufficient to deprive them, as they professed it did, 'of every guarantee for political security and permanence!' Such a confession of weakness at such a time was fraught with danger to those who made it. This did not escape the notice of the Prince.

'There is a great deal of stupidity in the world,' he writes (26th November) to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg. 'The three Northern Powers have declared that Cracow "*n'était qu'un atome dans le monde*," but that the continuance of this city as an independent state "*était à la Russie, la Prusse et l'Autriche toute garantie de sécurité et stabilité politique*," and they have appropriated it to themselves.

Sooner would I have been burned alive, than have made such a declaration.'[6]

Formal protests were separately made by both France and England against the annexation of Cracow, but these fell dead, as they were sure to do, so soon as the armed intervention of these countries in the affairs of Poland was no longer to be apprehended.[7] This had long been apparent. In the first heat of their estrangement, the question of the Spanish marriages continued to engross much of the attention of both Governments. Lord Palmerston, anxious to neutralise the danger likely to arise from the Montpensier marriage, called to his aid the Treaty of Utrecht, by which the union of the crowns of France and Spain in the person of one French Prince had been forbidden. The Montpensier marriage did not create the likelihood of such a contingency; but in Lord Palmerston's view the Treaty went further, and altogether excluded the Princes of the House of Orleans from the Spanish throne. This construction he used every effort to get the Northern Powers to adopt; but being, as it was, inconsistent with the language of the Treaty, the only effect was to keep alive the irritation between the Governments, in whose alienation these Powers saw their own advantage.

[6] 'A certain Montesquieu said once,' Bunsen writes to Stockmar, on the 11th November, 1846, 'that the principle of a certain form of government was "*la peur*." We have made such progress in principle that "*la peur de la peur*" is become the principle of modern rulers'– *Bunsen's Memoirs*, ii. 120.

[7] 'Metternich,' Lord Palmerston writes to Lord Normanby, on the 10th November, 1846, 'has no doubt long intended it (the annexation), and thinks the time propitious when England and France have differed, and when he thinks each would be willing to gain his support about Spain by being easy with him about Cracow. Guizot will make a show of resistance; but the fact is, that even if France and England had been on good terms, they have no means of action upon the spot in question, and could only have prevented the thing by a threat of war, which, however, the three Powers would have known we should never utter for the sake of Cracow.'—Lord Dalling's *Life of Lord Palmerston*, iii. 321

Not only in Spain, but also in the other countries of Europe, where the diplomatists of France and England came into collision, the evil effects of the discontinuance of friendly relations between those countries made themselves felt. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Portugal, where the disturbed state of the country and the conflict of despotic with constitutional principles presented a field for the intrigues of rival politicians. It was the aim of France to weaken the preponderating influence which England had long possessed in Portugal: and Queen Donna Maria, who had a strong personal attachment to Louis Philippe and his Queen, her own grand-aunt, fell under the influence of French counsels. The principles of Bourbon government, to which she naturally inclined, led her into various unconstitutional acts, which threatened the safety of her crown. These, while they caused great embarrassment to England, to whose support she in a measure owed her seat upon the throne, were a source of considerable anxiety to the Queen and Prince, from their intimate relationship to her husband King Ferdinand. 'The political horizon in Portugal,' Her Majesty writes to King Leopold at the end of 1846, 'is indeed very cloudy, and makes one very anxious.'

Nor was it in Portugal alone that the aspect of the political atmosphere gave cause for anxiety. The signs of coming tempests were visible throughout the whole continent of Europe. So far back as April 1845, Baron Stockmar had written from Coburg to the Prince as follows:—

'Had I but wings, I would fly to you, were it only for an hour or two, to talk over with you the state of Europe, which seems to me to be most peculiar. A new epoch seems to me to have been run into the mould, but, being still there, hardly any one can tell of what metal it is composed, or what shape it has taken. Meanwhile, and until the mould has

been completely broken away, we shall go on copying the time the Tower of Babel was building, for the prevailing confusion of language and ideas seems to be devised quite upon that model. I confess I long to see a way out of this state of things.'

Again, in November of the same year, he wrote to the Prince:

'So far as I can form a general opinion, the political condition of Europe strikes me as being ticklish. Even England betrays not a few ugly symptoms. Still, such, in my opinion, is the organic structure of its Constitution, that it will be able to bring into play the force and energy of its healthy parts to neutralise, to adjust, and to improve the action of those which are unsound. That England will have to grapple with and submit to material alterations in her organization is certain; but she will never, I feel assured, become so deadly sick as to raise any question as to her being able to pull through. On the other hand, some German statesmen of the great States are, in their respective spheres, looking forward to the future with real alarm.'

Baron Stockmar came over from Coburg in May 1846, and remained at the English Court until April 1847, when he returned to Germany. During this period the symptoms of revolutionary upheaval by which Europe was soon to be shaken had become more marked. The altered temper of men's minds, he saw clearly, was not likely to rest satisfied much longer with the settlement of 1815. 'I foresee great revolutions,' he writes in the beginning of 1847, 'with what results I will not venture to predict. I have little confidence in the wisdom of our statesmen who are now at the helm: we must make up our minds to witness great mistakes' (*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 467). To Bunsen he wrote about

the same time (3rd April 1847), 'I am more and more convinced we are on the eve of a great political crisis.

> The old rocks to its fall: the times are changing,
> And new life bursts and blossoms from the ruins.'
>
> SCHILLER'S *Wilhelm Tell*, Act V.

To have at hand for discussion and advice a politician of so much experience and sagacity during the progress of the eventful occurrences of this year was felt by the Prince to be of infinite value. His own riper observation and thought enabled him now to appreciate more fully than ever the broad views of his far-seeing and philosophic friend. There was no longer any question as to the Prince's interest in politics, or his assiduous devotion to whatever studies were necessary to qualify him for dealing with the problems, social and political, with which the future was teeming. How great was the change wrought in the young Prince of 1839, as drawn for us (p. 33 *supra*) by Baron Stockmar, by eight years of conscientious self-conquest and severe discipline, is strikingly shown by the language of the same stern critic in the letter from which we have just quoted:

'The Prince has made great strides of late. He has obviously a head for politics, before whose perspicacity even prejudices give way, which spring from education or want of experience. Place weighty reasons before him, and at once he takes a rational and just view, be the subject what it may. He has also gained much in self-reliance. His natural vivacity leads him at times to jump too rapidly to a conclusion, and he occasionally acts too hastily, but he has grown too clear-sighted to commit any great mistakes. He will now and then run against a post and bruise his shins. But a man cannot become an experienced soldier without having been in battle and getting a few blows; and, being what he is, small wounds, while they make him cautious, will give him confidence in himself. It is not likely that he will make any great political slip at the present juncture, when the relations with France are in such an uneasy state, for his temper is thoroughly

free from passion, and he has so keen and sure an eye, that he is not likely to lose his way and fall into mistakes. His mind becomes every day more active, and he devotes the greater part of his time to business without a murmur.'—*Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 466.

Whatever the anxieties which the troubled state of affairs both in Britain and abroad might bring upon the Prince, the Baron continues, his home-happiness was well assured. In regard to that, indeed, there was nothing left to wish for. The development of the Queen's character had kept pace with that of the Prince.

'The Queen also,' are his words, 'improves greatly. She makes daily advances in discernment and experience; the candour, the love of truth, the fairness, the considerateness with which she judges men and things, are truly delightful, and the ingenuous self-knowledge with which she speaks about herself is simply charming.' (*Ibid.* p. 467.)

Before the Baron left England he had the pleasure of seeing that the high qualities of the Prince had elicited a recognition, which spoke eloquently of the impression they had produced among those whose approbation was most to be desired. The Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge having become vacant by the death of the Duke of Northumberland on the 12th of February, 1847, the next day application was made to the Prince by Dr. Whewell, the Master of Trinity, and also separately by Lord Lansdowne, to allow himself to be put in nomination for the office. The request was as unexpected as it was gratifying, and, while it was still under consideration, a letter from the Bishop of London (Blomfield) to Mr. Anson conveyed the assurance, that the Prince's acceptance of the office would be regarded by many leading members of the University with whom he had conferred as 'honourable and advantageous to the University.' It also expressed his personal opinion, 'that not only the exalted

rank of the Prince, but his Royal Highness's scientific and literary attainments, and the distinction of his own academical career, point him out as a peculiarly fit person for the highest honours our University has to bestow.' The same day Mr. Anson replied to Dr. Whewell that, 'should a requisition be presented in such a manner as to convey to his Royal Highness a certainty that his election would meet the unanimous desire of the University of Cambridge, his Royal Highness would feel much pleasure in consenting to be put in nomination.' He also wrote to the Bishop of London that the Prince had agreed to stand if a 'general manifestation' in his favour was made.

No time was lost in obtaining signatures to an address by the members of the Senate of the University requesting the Prince to allow his name to be proposed for election, and in the meantime the strongest assurances were conveyed to him by the Vice-Chancellor and others of the wide-spread feeling in his favour. The address, signed by the majority of the most distinguished resident members of the Senate, was presented to the Prince at Buckingham Palace on the 18th. Meanwhile a difficulty had arisen which had not been foreseen when the Prince was first appealed to. Another candidate had been started in the person of the late Lord Powis, and it was now known that his Lordship's supporters intended to press their candidate. It was impossible that the Prince could embark in a competition of this nature. His reply, therefore, to the deputation who presented the address, after assuring them that while the wish which it expressed 'could not be otherwise than highly gratifying' to his feelings, conveyed a courteous intimation of his withdrawal from the contest. 'Did it not appear,' the Prince said, 'from the proceedings entered into by others in the University, that there does not exist that degree of unanimity which alone would leave me at liberty to consent to be put in nomination, I

should have felt both the greatest pleasure and pride in acceding to the desire expressed in this address, and so personally connecting myself with your ancient and renowned seat of learning.'

Here, in so far as the Prince was concerned, his candidature came to an end. But his supporters, among whom Trinity College was largely represented, were not in a temper to accept the triumph of a rival college (St. John's), by whom Lord Powis had been put in nomination. They accordingly determined to go to the poll, 'being persuaded,' as the manifesto issued in their name by Dr. Whewell bears, 'that a large majority of the University agree with them in thinking his Royal Highness the most proper person to be the Chancellor of the University. They are fortified in this resolution by finding that many persons of the highest rank and authority, not resident in the University, have the same intention.' The subsequent proceedings were conducted on both sides with the warmth and acerbity from which philosophic minds enjoy no exemption in contests of this kind—*tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?* The fiery cross was sped across the kingdom, and from every side members of the University flocked to Cambridge in unprecedented numbers to record their votes. Of these no fewer than 1,790 were given, of which 953 were for the Prince, and 837 for Lord Powis; the result being a majority of 116 in favour of the former. Of 24 Professors who voted, 16 gave their votes for the Prince. So, too, did 19 out of 30 Senior Wranglers, while of the resident members 3 to 1 also voted for him.

In communicating the result of the election to Colonel Phipps on the 27th February, Dr. Philpott, the Vice-Chancellor, wrote:—'I trust I may be allowed in this informal way to express my earnest hope that his Royal Highness will not decline to accept the mark of high respect and esteem which the University presents to him.' The

Prince, who had stood aloof from the struggle, was not without misgiving as to the propriety of his accepting the honour. The opinions of Lord Lansdowne and others were in favour of his doing so, and Sir Robert Peel, whom he consulted on the subject, supported the same view by the following reasons, which he transmitted to the Prince immediately on learning the result of the struggle.

'REASONS FOR ACCEPTING THE OFFICE.

'First. The election of the Prince has taken place under circumstances very unfavourable to success, and quite sufficient to account for the smallness of the majority.

'Secondly. The majority which voted for the Prince comprises a very large proportion of the most eminent men in the University, and almost all the chief academical authorities.

'Thirdly. To decline the office would be to give a triumph to the partisans of Lord Powis,—who would feel no gratitude for the concession, and would cause deep mortification and disappointment to all those who voted for the Prince, and of whom by far the greater number cannot be held responsible for the nomination of the Prince against his declared wishes.

'Fourthly. The refusal of the Prince will either lead to a renewed and bitter contest, ending probably in the election of Lord Powis,—or to the choice of Lord Powis, and the triumph of one college over the others without contest.

'Fifthly. The acceptance of the office without reluctance or delay, has about it a character of firmness and decision, of supporting friends instead of giving a triumph to opponents.

'Sixthly. In the course of a few months the contest will be forgotten, and the Prince will have the good will of the whole University.[8] The refusal to accept will conciliate no party, and will offend the strongest and the best party in the University.'

The reasons thus ably urged decided the Prince, and the same day he communicated his acceptance to the University in the following letter:—

[8] Lord Powis died in the course of the following year.

'Buckingham Palace, 27th February, 1847.

'Gentlemen,—I thank you for the promptitude with which you have apprised me of the result of the recent election for the Chancellorship of the University of Cambridge.

'I need scarcely observe, after so recent and public a declaration of my sentiments and feelings with regard to my nomination as a candidate for that office, that the proceedings which have subsequently taken place have been entirely without my sanction or privity.

'The intention to propose me as a candidate was not known to me until a period when the time for the election was at hand, and when the arrangements for ascertaining the sense of the University were already completed. I could only have suspended their progress by a peremptory declaration, that under no circumstances would I consent, if elected, to accept the office of Chancellor, and such a declaration I did not deem it respectful to the University to make.

'The election has now terminated, and a majority of the University, including a very great number of its members, most eminent for their services to the Church, to the University, and to the cause of literature and science, has declared itself in favour of my appointment to the vacant office. It is incumbent, therefore, upon me to notify without delay the course which under these circumstances I shall pursue.

'I have resolved to accept the trust, which the University is willing to confide to me.

'In forming this decision I have been influenced by a respectful deference to the wishes of a majority of its members, by a great unwillingness to involve the University in the probable necessity of another contest, but, above all, by an earnest hope that through a zealous and impartial discharge of the trust which I undertake, I shall succeed in establishing a claim on the confidence and goodwill of the whole Academical body.'

On the 25th March the ceremony of inauguration was gone through at Buckingham Palace, when the Letters Patent of the office were presented to the Prince by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Philpott, in presence of a deputation of the

most distinguished officials and about 130 members of the University. In replying to the address of Dr. Philpott, the Prince said:

'This dignity has been bestowed upon me by your spontaneous act, and I cannot but consider the proof of confidence in me which you have thereby shown to be more flattering from my not having been educated at your University.

'If, however, those ties of early associations, and that grateful feeling which attaches a scholar to the place to which he owes his mental development, must be wanting in my case, I hope that this deficiency may be compensated by that interest which I must most strongly feel in the welfare of this country, and in the institutions to which is committed the important trust of training the rising generation which is in future to serve and adorn her in Church and State.

'I feel that the task I shall have to perform is not rendered more easy by my having to repair the loss you have sustained by the death of that most excellent nobleman who filled the office of Chancellor before me; but you may rest assured that my new duties will engage my constant and earnest attention, and that you will always find me equally ready to co-operate with you in your endeavours to promote the general cause of religion, literature, and science, and to maintain those rights and privileges the exercise of which is essential to the performance of your duties.'

The dignity thus conferred upon the Prince was made more honourable by the circumstances under which he received it, and it was a further assurance to the Queen that he was gaining a sure hold upon the affection of her subjects. Writing to King Leopold on the 2nd March, Her Majesty says: 'Of course you have seen that Albert (after having declined, so that he had nothing to do with the unseemly contest) has been elected Chancellor of Cambridge. He could not do otherwise than accept it. We have been gratified at the great kindness and respect shown towards Albert by such numbers of distinguished people.'

It was a piece of pleasant intelligence also for those who loved him in the old Saxon homeland, and the Prince finds a place for it, almost as significant as a lady's postscript, in the following playful letter from Osborne to his stepmother there:

'Osborne, 13th March, 1847.

'A thousand thanks for your dear letter of the 26th ult., which you began with the best intention of writing legibly. I must assume "*l'homme propose, Dieu dispose.*" The gods have not willed that I should decipher it wholly, and they have therefore veiled my eyes in clouds, as they occasionally did the whole bodies of the heroes before Troy. Stronger than my destiny I own I am not; still I have triumphed so far as to discover that you are well, and, devoted son as I am, I find ample compensation in this intelligence. It is not every one who can give so favourable an account of himself this winter. At least I never remember to have seen so many people unwell. The winter seems as if it would never come to an end.

'We have come here in hopes to inhale the spring by the sea-shore under blossoming myrtles, laurels, and magnolias, and have found nothing but frost and parching east wind, with the addition two days ago of two feet of snow by way of variety.

'Meanwhile I have become Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, which has elected me after a violent party struggle, in which, however, I took no part whatever.'

One feature of the imposing ceremony of installation as Chancellor, which was not to take place till the following July, had immediately to be provided for. This was the customary Ode, to be set to music and performed on the occasion. The duty of selecting the person by whom it should be composed devolved upon the Prince, and he decided on requesting the venerable Poet Laureate to undertake the

task. 'His Royal Highness,' said Colonel Phipps, in his letter to Wordsworth intimating this request on behalf of the Prince, 'would have felt considerable hesitation in thus breaking in upon your retirement, were it not that his Royal Highness felt that he might thus bear testimony to his admiration of your genius, and might be the means of procuring for the University of Cambridge another valuable work of one of her most distinguished sons.'

The appeal kindled some sparks of his earlier fires in 'the old man eloquent'—he was then in his 77th year—and he replied:—

'Bath, 15th March, 1847.

'Sir,—The request, with which through your hands his Royal Highness the Prince Albert has honoured me, could not but be highly gratifying; and I hope that I may be able upon this interesting occasion to retouch a harp, which I will not say, with Tasso, oppressed by misfortunes and years, has been hung up upon a cypress, but which has, however, for some time been laid aside.

'I have the honour to be,
'With sincere respect, faithfully
'Your most obedient servant,
'WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.'

'The Hon. C. B. Phipps.'

Nor was it in vain that the poet once more invoked the genius, which long years before had produced that noble Ode,[9] in right of which he stands wellnigh supreme even where Milton and Dryden are his rivals. Such inspirations come, indeed, but once in a life, being, as they are, the quintessence of its deepest emotions and its most heavenward thoughts, which in a happy hour run themselves into moulds

[9] *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from the Recollections of Early Childhood*

of immortal beauty. Come, at least, they will not 'when mortal voices bid.' Still Wordsworth had no reason to be ashamed of the Ode with which he answered to the appeal thus made to him. It contains, indeed, no single lines or passages that rivet themselves upon the memory—nothing specially distinctive of the poet's genius; and this is probably the reason why he has excluded it from his collected works. But it is picturesque in conception and presents just such a succession of vivid images, skilfully relieved by light and shade, as with the accompaniment of music was best fitted for the circumstances under which it was to be heard.

Beginning with a glance at Napoleon's wasteful wars, and the joy of 'rescued Europe' at his fall, it proceeds:

'But lo! what sudden cloud has darkened all
The land as with a funeral pall?
The Rose of England suffers blight,
The flower has droop'd, the Isle's delight,
Flower and bud together fall—
A nation's hopes lie crush'd in Claremont's desolate hall.'

The next strophe passes by a natural transition to the peals 'On this bright May morn, which tell that the future Queen is born.'

'And a joyful cry through the Island rang,
As clear and bold as the trumpet's clang,
As bland as the reed of peace,—
"Victoria be her name!"

Time, in his mantle's sunniest fold,
Uplifted on his arms the child;
And, while the fearless infant smiled,
Her happy destiny foretold;—
"Infancy, by wisdom mild,
Trained to health and artless beauty;
Youth, by pleasure unbeguiled
From the love of lofty duty;

Womanhood in pure renown
Seated on her lineal throne;
Leaves of myrtle in her crown,
Fresh with lustre all their own.
Love, the treasure worth possessing
More than all the world beside,
This shall be her dearest blessing,
Oft to Royal hearts denied."'

The poet had well calculated the effect of such lines sung in the presence of the Queen and Prince before the flower of English scholarship and chivalry. Nor is he less skilful in his apostrophe to the Prince, of whom his own '*Happy Warrior*'—although he knew it not—was no inapt portrait.

'Prince, in these collegiate bowers,
Where science, leagued with holier truth,
Guards the sacred heart of youth,
Solemn monitors are ours.
These reverend aisles, these hallowed towers,
Raised by many a hand august,
Are haunted by majestic powers,
The memories of the wise and just,
Who, faithful to a pious trust,
Here in the founder's spirit sought
To mould and stamp the ore of thought
In that bold form and impress high
That best betoken patriot loyalty.
Not in vain these sages taught—
True disciples, good as great,
Have ponder'd here their country's weal,
Weigh'd the future by the past,
Learned how social frames may last,
And how a land may rule its fate
By constancy inviolate,
Though worlds to their foundations reel,
The sport of factious hate or godless zeal.

'Albert, in thy race we cherish
A nation's strength, that will not perish

While England's sceptred line
True to the King of kings is found;
Like that wise ancestor of thine
Who threw the Saxon shield o'er Luther's life,
When first above the yells of bigot strife
The trumpet of the Living Word
Assumed a voice of deep portentous sound
From gladdened Elbe to startled Tiber heard.—'

The Ode was skilfully set to music by Mr. Thomas Attwood Walmisley, M.A., and proved most effective in performance. 'The Installation Ode,' says Madame Bunsen, writing two days after (*Bunsen's Memoirs*, ii. 137), 'was really affecting, because the striking points selected were founded in fact, all exaggeration and *humbug* being avoided. Forgive the slang term; I never wrote it before—but so much of the thing signified meets one at every turn, turned in with almost everything, that to mark its absence alone constitutes high commendation.'

The stately halls and wooded walks of Cambridge never looked more gay than during the three days' festival of the Installation. Exquisite summer weather added brilliancy to the scene. Early on the 5th of July, the Queen and Prince left town for Cambridge. 'A splendid day,' says Her Majesty's *Diary*; 'the sky very blue, the sun very, very hot. At Tottenham, we took the Eastern Counties Railway—the great railway king, Mr. Hudson himself, going with us—and reached Cambridge Station at one.' Madame Bunsen, in the letter above cited, gives an animated picture of the reception which awaited the Royal party along the route:

'As we shot along, every station and bridge and resting-place and spot of shade was peopled with eager faces watching for the Queen, and decorated with flowers, but the brightest and gayest and most excited assemblage was at the Cambridge Station itself, and from thence along the streets to Trinity College the degree of ornament and crowd and animation was always in-

creasing. I think I never saw so many children before in one morning. I felt so much moved at the spectacle of such a mass of life collected together and animated by one feeling, and that a joyous one, that I was at a loss to conceive "how any woman's sides can bear the beating of so strong a throb" as must attend the consciousness of being the object of that excitement, and the centre of attraction to all these eyes. . . . We saw the Queen's entrance into Trinity Lodge, as we stood at a window in the Lodge, and the academic crowd, in picturesque attire, were as loud in rejoicing as any mob could have been. Soon after I went with Mrs. Whewell, Lady Hardwicke, and Lady Monteagle, to take our places in the yet vacant Great Hall of Trinity, whither the Queen came to receive the Chancellor's address, and a few minutes after she had placed herself on the throne, the Chancellor entered from the opposite end, in his beautiful dress of black and gold, with a long train held up—made a graceful bow, and read an address, to which the Queen read an answer with peculiar emphasis, uttering approbation of the choice made by the University. Admirable was the command of countenance in both; and she only smiled upon the Prince at the close, when all was over, and she had allowed all the Heads of Houses to kiss her hand, which they did with exquisite variety of awkwardness, all but two or three.'

Let us now turn to the record of 'the observed of all observers' in this ceremony. 'I cannot say,' Her Majesty writes in her *Diary* the same day, 'how it agitated and embarrassed me to have to receive this address, and hear it read by my beloved Albert, who walked in at the head of the University, and who looked dear and beautiful in his robes, which were carried by Colonel Phipps and Colonel Seymour. Albert went through it all admirably—almost absurd, however, as it was for us. He gave me the Address, and I read the answer; a few kissed hands, and then Albert retired with the University.'

After luncheon Her Majesty and suite repaired to the Senate House. 'It reminded me,' the *Diary* continues, 'of Cologne and Bonn having the Prussian Prince (Walde-

mar) with us, and driving about from one place to another. Albert received me at the door, and led me up to the seat prepared. He sat covered in his Chancellor's chair. There was a perfect roar of applause, and the heat was overpowering. Some preliminary business was gone through, and then the public Orator made a long, too long, Latin speech. The three Princes (Prince Waldemar of Prussia, Prince Peter of Oldenburg, and the Hereditary Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar), Lords Abercorn, Spencer, and Fortescue, M. Van de Weyer, Prince Lowenstein, the Bishops of Oxford, Tasmania, Cape Town, and Melbourne, were made doctors. So also were Sir G. Grey, Sir Harry Smith (who was much cheered), Sir R. Murchison, Professor Ehrenberg—very odd and very German-looking—and Professor Muhler. . . . Got home at twenty minutes to five. Wrote and worked. Such a hot day; but Cambridge looks beautiful in summer, so different from what we saw it at the end of October, and with all its gardens so green, and the flowers in the windows of the colleges, has a very fine effect.' After dining with the Vice-Chancellor, and hearing the first part of a concert at the Senate House, 'where Lablache, Alboni, and Salvi sang very well,' the Queen and Prince returned to Trinity Lodge soon after ten. 'On our return, Albert went off to the Observatory, and I walked in the nice little garden here with my two ladies.'

Next day the ceremony of installation was gone through in the Senate House. The Prince, who had preceded the Queen, received Her Majesty at the door, and conducted her to her place. 'It was still more crowded; the heat greater almost than yesterday, and the applause tremendous.' After the prize poems had been read, and the medals had been distributed by the Prince, came the performance of the Installation Ode. 'The applause was immense, and "God save the Queen" was called for, and sung by the whole audience, which had a very fine effect. We drove home at a

quarter to twelve. I occupied myself during the rest of the morning in reading, writing, working, and drawing.' After luncheon, the Royal party went to a horticultural show, in the grounds of Downing College. 'We walked round and into all the tents; I think there were six—and really this was a very formidable undertaking, for the heat was beyond endurance, and the crowd fearful.'

A great banquet in Trinity Hall, followed by a reception, concluded the public proceedings of the day. 'The evening being so beautiful,' says Her Majesty's *Diary*, 'we proposed to walk out, and accordingly at ten set out in curious costumes: Albert in his dress coat, with a mackintosh over it; I, in my evening dress and diadem, and with a veil over my head, and the two Princes in their uniform, and the ladies in their dresses, and shawls, and veils. We walked through the small garden, and could not at first find our way, after which we discovered the right road, and walked along the beautiful avenues of lime-trees in the grounds of St. John's College, along the water and over the bridges. All was so pretty and picturesque—in particular, that one covered bridge of St. John's College, which is like the Bridge of Sighs at Venice. We stopped to listen to the distant hum of the town; and nothing seemed wanting, but some singing, which everywhere but here in this country we should have heard. A lattice opened, and we could fancy a lady appearing, and listening to a serenade.'

By eight o'clock next morning, the Royal party were again astir. After a busy morning, during which the Prince held a levee, and visits were paid to the library of Trinity, and to the grounds of St. John's College, in which there was a great gathering of the leading people of the Eastern counties, the Court bade adieu to Cambridge, where, says the record so often quoted, 'we had spent a truly pleasant and most interesting time. To see my Albert honoured and esteemed,

as he deserves, gives me the deepest satisfaction. . . . We reached Buckingham Palace at half-past five, and found all the children very well. I felt tired and *étourdie*. We walked a little in the garden—then dined alone, and spent a dear, happy, and peaceful evening.'

Baron Stockmar, who had been ill, and suffering from one of those fits of despondency to which he was subject, was not forgotten; and a few lines from the Prince assured him, that all had gone off at Cambridge to a wish.

'Buckingham Palace, 9th July, 1847.

'My dear Stockmar,—Our expedition to Cambridge has gone off *extraordinarily* well, although it involved unusual excitement and fatigue. Never have I seen people in such good humour. There was a great gathering of bishops, scholars, royal personages (*Fürstlichkeiten*), nobles and political men, and all seemed well pleased. My Latin, too, proved a success. You will see all the details in the newspapers.

'. . . Your mental powers appear to me not to have suffered, for I have not this many a day read anything so clear in thought and striking in expression as your long letter to Bunsen on the Press question, which he communicated to me.'

CHAPTER XIX.

The state of affairs both abroad and at home at the close of 1846 was calculated to occasion grave anxiety, if not apprehension, to the most sanguine politician. The disturbance of our cordial relations with France embarrassed our whole foreign policy. The ill-omened Spanish marriages had in them the seeds of future mischief to Spain itself, as well as to the chief victim in the transaction, which it required no prophetic power to foresee, and which were rapidly developed during the following year in the fall of administration after administration, and in the estrangement of the Queen and King and rumours of their probable divorce. Portugal had risen in arms against its Sovereign, and the country, laid waste by civil warfare carried on without decisive results on either side, was menaced by all the evils of poverty, famine, and revolution. Italy, stirred to the heart with hatred against the oppression by which it had so long been paralysed, demanded from its effete Governments a recognition of Constitutional principles, that would give freedom to thought, and a free field for material and social progress. To this aspiration a strong impulse had been given by the liberal opinions and the reforms of Pio Nono, on his accession to the Pontificate in the summer of 1846. The dream of a free and united Italy had become familiar to men's minds. Sardinia had identified herself with the popular movement; and Austria, alarmed for her footing in the Peninsula, was busy with preparations for a struggle,

which it was obvious could not be far distant. In Switzerland revolutions had taken place in Berne and Geneva, which threatened, and indeed were soon afterwards followed by, civil war, embittered by the deadly element of religious animosities. Germany was not behind the other countries of Europe in demanding from her Sovereigns a recognition of the political rights of their subjects; and it was impossible not to foresee great danger in the indisposition of her rulers to appreciate the signs of the times, and the determination of their people to continue no longer without a voice in the government of their affairs.

At home, again, a heavy cloud hung over the land. Years of unusual commercial prosperity, which had led as usual to over speculation, had been followed by the inevitable reaction. Employment had grown scarcer; wages had fallen; the crops had failed throughout the greater part of Europe; pinched by poverty, the working classes were again turning an ear to the doctrines of political agitators. Bankruptcy and commercial distress were general; and it was feared that, gloomy as the present state of affairs might be, still gloomier prospects awaited the country in the months to come.

It was in this condition of things that the nation was called upon to grapple with the calamity of famine and pestilence, which had now fallen upon Ireland with a force far beyond the worst that had been feared by Sir Robert Peel and his Government, when first brought face to face with the failure of the potato crop of 1845. As they had then foreseen, the failure of the same crop in 1846 had been still more widely spread; and the ravages of the disease had fallen with scarcely less destructiveness upon the Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland. In Ireland alone the loss from this cause was computed at not less than sixteen millions. On a population, whose numbers had long been far in excess of the resources of the country for comfort or even decent

well-being, the effect wrought by the total failure of their at best scanty means of subsistence was appalling. 'A famine,' as Lord John Russell said at the time, 'of the thirteenth had fallen upon a people of the nineteenth century,' and not all the sympathy and wealth of their more fortunate fellow-subjects were able to avert the direful consequences that ensued. Between September and the 1st January, 1847, two millions of money were advanced from the Treasury to relieve the prevailing distress, and during this period 500,000 men were living upon the funds of the State. But not even this expenditure, though continued with a lavish hand, and supplemented by the liberal bounty of individuals, could stay the ravages of disease and death which followed with merciless fatality in the footsteps of the prevailing want. In the Union of Skibbereen, for example, nearly the whole population, consisting of 11,000 persons, perished of famine, and the deaths in the workhouses were 140 in a single month. The mortality of Ireland, which on the average of the three years preceding the famine was 77,754, rose in 1847 to 249,335. Every circumstance of horror and dismay, that could attend an enfeebled population overtaken by a calamity for which they were wholly unprovided, was illustrated in the ghastly story of Ireland during that year; and the hearts of the British nation were daily wrung by narratives, 'nothing exceeding which,' to use the language of Lord Brougham in the House of Lords on the 19th of January, 1847, 'is to be found in the page of Josephus, or on the canvas of Poussin, or in the dismal chant of Dante.'

On that day Parliament had been opened by the Queen in person, with a speech in which the terrible condition of Ireland occupied the most prominent place. In delivering this Speech it was observed at the time (*Annual Register*, v. 89, p. 4), 'that the passages relating to Irish distress were delivered by Her Majesty in rather a subdued tone, and

with an accent of sympathy for the sufferings deplored.' The sympathy, which betrayed itself through all the self-command required for the delivery of the Royal Speech, was destined to be put to still severer trials by the events of the next few months. It was but an index of the feeling which reigned not only in the breasts of Her Majesty's audience, but was universal throughout the United Kingdom. This found its expression in the cordial goodwill in which all parties in Parliament joined in strengthening the hands of Government to meet the urgent necessities of the case. Differences there were, and these not a few, as to the best means of applying some permanent remedy for a state of things which had made such a calamity possible. But there were none as to the necessity for present help. Pinched as the mass of the community both in England and Scotland themselves were during the year 1847, the immense votes of public money for Ireland were viewed by them without a grudge; and not merely so, but the funds of individuals were subscribed with unprecedented liberality to relieve the horrors of famine, as well as of the fever and pestilence which followed in its train during this and the subsequent years.

How severe was the pressure on the great bulk of the British people during the early part of this year may be estimated from the fact that in February wheat was selling at 102 shillings a quarter. It rose still higher in the following months. The scarcity, thus plainly indicated, was felt through every household. Not even the Palace escaped. 'The price of bread,' says Her Majesty, writing on the 18th May, 'is of an unparalleled height; we have been obliged to reduce every one to a pound per day, and only secondary flour to be used in the Royal kitchen.'[1]

On 4th February Lord George Bentinck, who had expressed

[1] Owing to the abundant harvest of the following summer, the price of wheat had fallen in November to 48 shillings a quarter.

himself, during the debate on the Queen's Speech, dissatisfied with the Ministerial measures for the relief of Ireland, brought forward a very carefully devised and comprehensive scheme of permanent relief in the shape of advances to the extent of sixteen millions to be made by the Government for the construction of railways in Ireland. The powers for the construction of these railways had been already granted; and the Government advances were to come in supplement of eight millions, which were to be provided by the companies who had been authorised to construct them, but were unable, in the prostrate condition of the country, to raise the whole of the necessary capital. The scheme was enforced by all that minute accuracy of statistical detail and careful anticipation of practical difficulties which distinguished its author. By itself, it would certainly not have met the immediate necessities of the case. The famine was most prevalent in districts where no railways had been sanctioned; and it would have been impossible to move at once the working population to the localities where they were wanted. Still, much might have been done, had labour been diverted to such works of permanent utility as railways from the futile operations to which it had been applied under the Government grants of the previous session. A large portion of the public money, instead of being absolutely wasted, would have created what would have been a permanent source of national wealth, and would have developed the resources of the country many years in advance of what was otherwise possible. Ireland had not itself the capital to keep pace with the rest of the kingdom in the construction of its railways. England and Scotland were at the time overburdened with the railway works which they had in hand, and the capital of those countries, even if it had been free, was not likely to be invested in the sister kingdom, impoverished and crippled as it was by the events of this miser-

able time. The disaster was an imperial disaster, only to be met by imperial means; and the circumstances were altogether too exceptional for the application of the rule, otherwise incontrovertible, which was successfully adduced against the measure, that, as the State had not taken railways into their own hands from the first, they ought not to interfere with private enterprise in carrying out the railway system.

The Government rested their chief objections to the measure on the ground that, if 16,000,000*l.* were to be devoted to this purpose, they did not see their way to providing the funds necessary to meet the immediate demands created by the famine. They found a powerful supporter in Sir Robert Peel, who used his great influence as a master of finance to persuade the House that 'with the three-per-cents at ninety-one, exchequer bills scarcely at a premium, our foreign relations justifying anxiety, and a probable deficit of six or seven millions to be provided for,' the Government was in no position to undertake further engagements amounting to 16,000,000*l.* So well did he succeed in this his first great appearance in opposition to the Protectionist leader, who had overthrown his own Government, that the Bill was lost by a majority of 204 in a House of 440.

After the very decided stand made by the Government against this measure, no small surprise was excited by their soon afterwards bringing forward a proposition for advancing 620,000*l.* in loans to certain Irish Railway Companies. This proposition was carried by a large majority in face of the opposition of Sir Robert Peel, and amid the exultations of Lord George Bentinck and his followers, who saw in it a virtual triumph of the principles on which their own more comprehensive measure had been based.

Meanwhile the condition of affairs in England as well as Ireland was becoming more critical. Money was growing

dearer and dearer, manufactures and trade were paralysed, and darkness and distrust hung upon the horizon of the future. Chill and ungenial weather added to the general depression. Writing to Baron Stockmar from Osborne on 22nd April, the Prince says, 'We are all well, despite the miserable weather, and the unintermitting miserable news from all quarters. Belgium is the only pleasant spot in Europe, for which God be praised. Here difficulties are brooding for a future period; still the peace of the country will remain unbroken. In Ireland we are daily expecting rebellion and civil war.'

Nor, as we have already seen, was the aspect of affairs throughout Europe more reassuring. In Prussia King Frederick William had inaugurated a new era by the publication in February of a series of ordinances granting a Constitution to that country, and convoking and regulating the proceedings of the United Diet. But the measure was signally unsatisfactory, as it created an Assembly, to be used for purposes of consultation only, without any real power either of initiative or control, and dependent even for being convoked on the mere will of the Sovereign. It has been said by Machiavelli, that no one should be a despot by halves. The saying is equally true of a constitutional King. A half measure of this kind could satisfy no one. Those who were bent on the establishment of true parliamentary government found in it only a fresh incentive to press for a substantial representation of the national will; while the antagonists of monarchy were confirmed by it in their conviction that no real concession of popular rights was to be expected from the Sovereign. The Speech of the King at the opening of the Diet on 11th April,—a remarkable display of the eloquence which stirs the heart, but leaves the intellect unsatisfied—left no doubt in men's minds that the Royal ordinances could only be the prelude to great and probably stormy

agitation. Such, at least, appears to have been the impression produced by it on the Prince's mind. On 15th April he writes to Baron Stockmar:—

'I have to-day read with alarm the King of Prussia's Speech, which in my vile word-for-word translation into English produces a truly strange impression. Those who know and love the King recognise him and his views and feelings in every word, and will be grateful to him for the frankness with which he expresses them; but if we put ourselves into the position of a cold critical public, our heart sinks. What confusion of ideas! And what boldness in a King to speak extempore; and at such a moment, and at such length, not only to touch all the most terrible and difficult topics, but to plunge into them slap-dash, to call God to witness, to promise, threaten, protest, &c.'

In writing to Baron Stockmar a few days later the Prince remarks on two qualities in the character of King Frederick William, which were soon found to interfere fatally with his powers to deal with the problems of practical politics.

'The King lets himself be misled by similes which captivate his fancy, which he carries out only so far as they suit his purpose, and which frequently by no means reflect the true state of things, but satisfy because they are clever and suggestive (*geistreich*).[2] This makes close discussion with him impossible. . . . Then the King runs another risk in this, that he adopts *subjective feelings* and opinions as the motive principle of his actions, and then not only acts upon them, but also desires that, as these feelings and opinions are dear and sacred to him, they should be the same to everybody else, no matter whether they are not even affected by

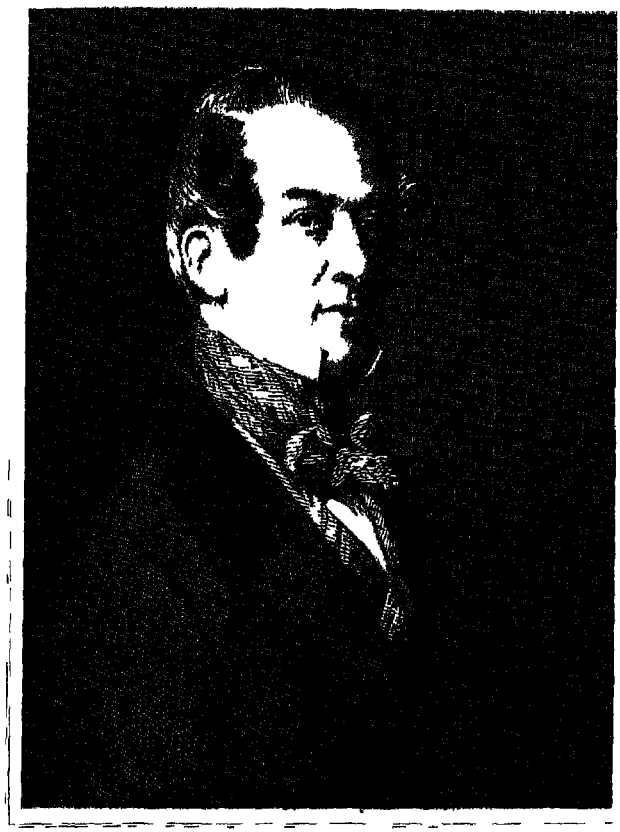
[2] 'Half the wrong conclusions at which mankind arrives, are reached by the abuse of metaphors, and by mistaking general resemblance or imaginary similarity for real identity.'—Lord Palmerston, in a letter cited in Lord Dalling's *Life*, ii. 208.

them in the slightest degree or not, nay, although to carry them into effect would operate a probable injustice. To this class belong those feelings of piety towards the late King, which only the son can feel, and those favourite maxims, which have a special truth for *him*, springing as they do out of certain favourite studies and lines of thought. Herein is to be found the key to his strange address from the throne. It is a purely subjective Brandenburg, Hohenzollern, Frederick-Wilhelmish opinion. . . .'

'Since December,' the Prince continues, 'affairs in Germany have improved at every turn. Russia has felt that above all things a further attempt on the nationality of Poland would not be politic, and Prussia, by her entrance into constitutional life, has been withdrawn from those alliances by which she has identified herself with the Northern powers, although the King thinks he must and can hold by them, and he will soon perceive that even although *he* were disposed to do so, the two other Powers would not agree to have him.'

As already mentioned, Baron Stockmar had returned to Germany in the beginning of April. During the lengthened stay he had made in England on the occasion of this visit, the Prince had become more than ever accustomed to associate this priceless friend with whatever interested his attention or occupied his thoughts. Herr Friedrich Carl Meyer, now Councillor of Legation at Berlin, who became the Prince's librarian and secretary in May 1846, on the retirement of Dr. Prætorius, gives a vivid picture of these Friends in Council. 'Commonly towards evening, when he had returned from a drive or business, the Prince came running to the Baron's room, his arms full of papers and despatch boxes, with the impetuosity peculiar to him,[3] and, telling his own

[3] This passage occurs in an admirable Memoir of Baron Stockmar, which appeared in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for October 1863. In a note upon this



news and asking for ours, flung himself down to rest upon the sofa, while his old friend, first listening observantly, and anon breaking into talk, walked up and down, and poured forth a sparkling store of mingled experiences, maxims, anecdotes, and illustrations drawn for the most part from his own life.'

The chain of intimacy thus established was kept up by active correspondence after the Baron's return to Germany. In the conviction that no event of either the home or public life of the Queen or himself was without interest for his friend, it was always a pleasure for the Prince to steal some moments from his scanty leisure to keep him informed of what was going on. Thus on 29th May he writes to him amidst the distractions of a house filled with distinguished guests, and the countless claims of the London season:

'Dear Stockmar,—We are frightfully taken up with royal personages. The Grand Duke Constantine, the Hereditary Prince of Lucca, Prince Oscar of Sweden, the Hereditary Grand Duke and Duchess of Weimar, are all here together, besides which "the season" has suddenly become active, and a host of old promises of public dinners, parties, meetings,

passage, Stockmar's biographer says, 'that the weight of business which by degrees the Prince took upon himself was so great, that he had got into the habit in all his movements, even when passing along the corridors, of going at a double quick pace.'

Herr Meyer met Stockmar for the first time in 1846 at Baron Bunsen's in London. In his Memoir already quoted, he gives the following spirited sketch of this remarkable man: 'During breakfast, Baron Stockmar was announced; he entered and sat down, very soon dominating the conversation—an active, decided, slender, rather little man, with a compact head, brown hair, streaked with grey, a bold, short nose, firm yet full mouth, and, what gave a peculiar air of animation to his face, with two youthful, flashing brown eyes, full of roguish intelligence and fiery provocation. With this exterior, the style of his demeanour and conversation corresponded; bold, bright, pungent, eager, full of thought, so that amid all the bubbling copiousness and easy vivacity of his talk, a certain purpose was never lost sight of in his remarks and illustrations.'

bazaars, &c. will have to be fulfilled, and this with the thermometer at 25 Réaumur. Ascot falls next week.

'In home politics, O'Connell's death is the most recent event, and it has had no effect whatever.[4] It is a befitting end to an agitator, that, two years after he had stood before the world like a Colossus, he should pass out of it unnoted, whereas the man of true worth cannot survive his reputation. Lord Bessborough is also dead, and Lord Clarendon has taken his place.'

Had Baron Stockmar's love of music—which was by no means small—been sufficiently ardent to overcome his invincible repugnance to going to hear it in any public place, this letter would probably have contained some reference to a singer, who had a fortnight before taken the town by storm, and whose performances gave to the Queen and Prince at this time many hours of exquisite enjoyment. In a letter written only two days previously to King Leopold, who, like the Prince, was passionately fond of music, Her Majesty had written:—'Jenny Lind is really quite *eine seltene Erscheinung*. Her acting alone is worth going to see, and the *piano* way she has of singing is, as Lablache says, unlike anything he ever heard. He is a good and impartial judge, and he is quite enchanted, and says she is wholly unlike any one else. There is a purity in her singing and acting which is quite indescribable.'

Matters of more interest to Baron Stockmar were at this time engaging much of the Prince's attention. In 1836 the Baron had conducted to a successful issue, under circumstances of no ordinary difficulty, the negotiations for the marriage of Queen Donna Maria of Portugal with Prince Ferdinand, the son of the younger brother of the then reigning Duke of Coburg. His zeal for the principles of

[4] He died on his way to Rome at Genoa, on 15th May, at the age of 72.

constitutional government, no less than his interest in the welfare of the Coburg family, had made him an anxious observer of the recent occurrences in Portugal, where the arbitrary and despotic proceedings of the Government had driven the people into rebellion, and a civil war had raged for many months. Not a word was to be said in defence of the conduct of the Queen and her Government. Yielding to the suggestions of evil counsellors she had deprived her subjects of the rights guaranteed to them by the constitution of stating their grievances in the Cortes. 'The reply of the people,' to use the language of Lord Palmerston,[5] 'was natural and just. Driven from the hustings and from Parliament, they sought refuge in the field.' Meanwhile the country was being wasted, the passions of its population roused, and its resources sapped by the miseries of a war, which must end in permanent injury to its welfare, with whichever party success might ultimately rest, and doom it in all likelihood to years of hopeless anarchy. It was no part of English policy to interfere in the internal dissensions of a foreign State; but at the same time she could not regard with indifference the disasters with which a country was threatened, to which she was bound by the alliance of centuries, as well as by the ties of intimate commercial relations. The maintenance of peace upon the Continent was also a matter of the utmost importance, and any separate intervention by Spain or France—and there was strong reason to apprehend that such intervention would take place—would have made this impossible.

In these circumstances what was England to do? Was she to stand aloof, while the contending parties fought out their differences, waiting until the miserable drama should be brought to a close, 'either by wide-spread destruction and

[5] Despatch to Sir Hamilton Seymour of 13th June, 1847, quoted in Lord Dalling's *Life*, p. 334.

desolating anarchy, or by the establishment of a cruel and revengeful tyranny?'[6] If she were content to stand aside, so would not Spain, who could not brook a revolutionary party at her doors. As little would France, who very early intimated her opinion that a case had arisen under which she might be called upon, in terms of the Quadruple Treaty, for military and naval aid.

For many months the English Government confined their action to mediation between the Portuguese Government and the Junta—urging on the former such concessions as would remove the causes of the war, and at the same time secure an amnesty to those who had placed themselves at the head of the popular party. Language could not be more explicit than was used by our representative at Lisbon to make the Queen and her Ministers understand that they must not expect England either to help them to continue a system of misgovernment, or to allow Spain to give them support for such a purpose.[7] On the Queen herself and some members of her Government these remonstrances produced an effect; but the Marquis of Saldanha, who, besides being President of the Council, was also Commander-in-Chief of the army, refused to be a party to any measures of conciliation, and threatened to resign his office unless resort were taken to Spanish intervention; in other words, unless the minority of the nation should, by aid of a Spanish force, be enabled to crush the majority. He followed up this intima-

[6] Speech of Lord Palmerston (5 July, 1847) on Mr. Bernal Osborne's motion. —*Hansard*, vol. xciii. p. 1202.

[7] See Despatch from Lord Palmerston to Sir H. Seymour, the English Minister at Lisbon, of 5th February, 1847, quoted by Lord Dalling, vol. iii., p. 337. 'The Queen,' says the Despatch, 'should remember that unless she shews herself to be the Sovereign of the whole nation, she cannot expect the whole nation to regard and love her as their Sovereign; and that a throne whose stability rests on the point of the bayonet has a very ticklish and uncertain basis. Pray preach all these things, and such others as may occur to you in the same spirit.'

tion by marching on Oporto, which was held by the forces of the Junta, early in March; and there the conflicting armies remained face to face in a state of inaction until the end of April, when the Saldanha Ministry resigned. Upon this Queen Donna Maria accepted the English offers of mediation, and agreed to negotiations being opened with the insurgents upon the terms suggested by the English Government. Hostilities were suspended, and Colonel Wylde went to Oporto to endeavour to induce the Junta to accept the offered terms.

Colonel Wylde was unsuccessful in his mission. The English Government had been careful to make the terms offered to the Junta such, that their refusal would justify the Ministry, before Parliament and before the world, in taking active measures to put an end to the war. France and Spain were now prepared to make common cause with them for this purpose, and on the 21st May a Conference was held in London between the representatives of these countries and those of Portugal and England, when a protocol was agreed to, embodying the terms to be offered to the Junta by the Queen, and by which the four Powers at the same time engaged to co-operate by force of arms to attain the common object.

The affair had reached this point, when the Prince wrote the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'Buckingham Palace, 7th June, 1847.

'I must keep you somewhat *au courant*, little time as I have for doing so. In politics, Parliament is now the rock ahead. Our proposals have been rejected by the Junta, as you know, and thereupon a protocol was drawn up with Portugal, Spain, and France, according to which the Junta is to be brought into submission. . . . A direct motion of censure and affirmation of the principles of non-intervention

is now to be brought forward, on which the Protectionists and Radicals will unite, the friends of Don Miguel and Montemolin with those of the Junta, those of Palmella (who is here), &c., with the enemies of Lord Palmerston, and generally those who want to have no trouble from foreign affairs. Yesterday I saw Sir Robert (Peel), who is greatly alarmed, and believes the Protectionists are bent on getting the elections into their hands,[8] and might very easily place the Government in a minority, which would entail as its consequence the Ministry's going out here and the triumph of the Junta in Portugal. The debate is fixed for Thursday.

'The public will set down the business as a Coburg family affair, and especially in connection with the fact that Sir Hamilton Seymour went direct from Brussels to Lisbon, that Wylde is in my service, that we have received Dietz[9] at Court here, and say that Ministers have taken the step unwillingly, &c. *Nous verrons!*'

Meanwhile, the fleet of the Portuguese insurgents, under the command of the Conde das Antas, had sailed out of Oporto, and surrendered on the 31st of May, on the summons of the British Admiral. Writing on the 12th of June to Baron Stockmar, the Prince says:—'You will have already heard that the united fleet before Oporto has taken prisoner Das Antas, with all his ships and 4,000 men. The Junta now gives in, and will accept our mediation.[10] The effect of this here has been greatly to allay the Parliamentary storm, but it is still very

[8] A general election was now imminent.

[9] A German gentleman, who had been attached in a non-official capacity to the Portuguese Court.

[10] This proved to be not strictly the case. Hostile operations continued to be carried on in the neighbourhood of Oporto; and it was not until the city had been invested by the Spanish troops, which had been sent into Portugal under General Concha, to co-operate with the other powers, that the Junta finally accepted the terms offered. This was not finally arranged till the 30th of June.

violent. A hot debate, in which the Radicals and Protectionists attacked the Portuguese Court, Sir H. Seymour, Colonel Wyndle, and the Ministry, with remarkable bitterness, has been adjourned, and will occupy a portion of next week. Lord Stanley will then commence an onslaught in the Lords.'

On the 11th of June the Portuguese question was brought before the House of Commons by Mr. Joseph Hume, who moved, 'That in the judgment of this House, the armed interference of this Government between political parties in Portugal is unwarrantable in principle, and likely to lead to serious and mischievous consequences.' The debate was continued on the 14th, when, after a very able speech, in which Sir Robert Peel threw the whole weight of his authority into the scale with the Government, the discussion collapsed by the House being counted out at the early hour of eight o'clock. The Prince reports the result in the following letter to Baron Stockmar:—

'The day before yesterday the Portuguese debate came to an end in the strangest way. It had lasted three days with the greatest warmth and bitterness, and, on the day of the Division, Lord Stanley made a furious attack in the Upper House. In the House of Commons Peel made a masterly speech in support of the Ministry, and thereupon the House was counted out. In the House of Lords they divided, after a speech of Lord Lansdowne and the old Duke in opposition to Stanley, as nobody would speak on Stanley's side, and the majority was 20 against Stanley, who had left the House himself.

'Now there is nothing but recriminations between the Radicals and the Protectionists, and between these again among themselves, and also between Lord George Bentinck and Lord Stanley. It seems, Lord George Bentinck had let

the House of Commons be counted out because he was not sure of his majority, and, as he was quite sure of it in the Lords, the vote of censure would have had all the effect of coming, as it were, from both Houses. The Ministers are greatly pleased, and Palmerston, who, strange to say, had not spoken a word in the debate, said to us, "It is very well so, but perhaps it would have been better if the Secretary for Foreign Affairs had had an opportunity of saying a few words." Now the Opposition is laughed at on all sides. Hume is furious, and yesterday called Sir Robert's speech "a mass of absurdities."

'Peel thinks the whole affair "the most curious instance in Parliamentary history." On Sunday he was on the point of coming to me to prepare me for the coming catastrophe, and Lord John wrote to the Queen, "Your Majesty must be prepared to receive the resignation of Ministers towards the end of the week." The chief attacks have been directed against poor Wylde, "that firebrand!" as Hume called him. The debate was, moreover, distinguished by boundless one-sidedness and adhesion to the Junta.

'Buckingham Palace, 17th June, 1847.'

The opportunity of saying a few words in defence of his policy which Lord Palmerston desired was furnished by a motion of Mr. B. Osborne's on Portuguese affairs on the 5th of July following, when his lordship wound up a very remarkable speech in these words:—

'Our object has been neither to serve the Portuguese Crown nor to oppress the Portuguese people. We found Portugal a prey to civil war which threatened to lay waste the country, to deluge it with blood, to ruin its finances, to put an end to its prosperity, and to bring in famine as the only stop to military operations. Looking, then, at Portugal as our natural ally, as a country which it was important for British interests to maintain as a material element in the balance of European power—viewing

it as very important to British interests, that this country should remain a wealthy and prosperous friend, we thought we should best consult our duty in obtaining for the Portuguese nation those constitutional securities, which by the bad advice of the Councillors of the Crown in that country had been suspended: our object was to put an end to bloodshed, and in that we have succeeded. And in bringing the war to a peaceful termination—in transferring the struggle from the field of battle to the arena of Parliamentary debate, we have, I think, earned the thanks of political parties in this country, and given the Portuguese nation the means which the constitution and the popular institutions of the country have secured to them of stating their grievances, of obtaining,—and, if necessary, I will say, of extorting—redress from the Crown.'—*Hansard*, vol. xciii. p. 1214.

It was not unnatural, in the weak condition of the Ministry, that serious apprehensions should be felt as to the issue of the debate on Mr. Hume's motion. There was much to be said against whatever bore the semblance of interfering between a justly incensed people and their sovereign, which was sure to commend itself to the popular mind. In the present case it was by no means easy to establish, that we had not violated our favourite principle of non-intervention, and violated it for this very purpose. The arguments in support of this view lay upon the surface. On the other hand, it required a judgment both calm and courageous to come to the conclusion, that having the means to save the country from permanent disaster, and the Sovereign from the evil effects of mischievous advisers, if not from ultimate ruin, we were bound to use them, not only in our own interests but in those of Europe. It is interesting to see the view of this Parliamentary crisis taken by Baron Stockmar. On the 25th of June he writes to the Prince:—

'In reading the news you sent me about Portugal, and thinking over them since, I have been once more forcibly impressed with the truth and significance of the maxim that

a man's observation and judgment are influenced in a remarkable degree by the nearness or remoteness in which he stands relatively to the matters of which he has to judge. Hence I was unable from first to last to consider any one of the apprehensions as well founded, which the Hume motion had occasioned partly to the Ministry, partly to well-disposed and intelligent men like Sir Robert Peel.

'The attitude taken up by England was so clearly, decisively, and unmistakably indicated by outward circumstances, and so authoritatively prescribed in purely English interests, and the Ministry had held back so long, and in the measures ultimately adopted by them had inclined so much to the side of the insurgents, that I could only regard as truly absurd the apprehension that what they had done could possibly be denounced as un-English, despotic, and wrong. . . . Fear seems, however, to have infected all who wished to support the Ministry, and to this, too, may be ascribed Macaulay's extravagant coquetting with the Portuguese insurgents and the Radicals in the House of Commons. There his speech may have produced an effect, but it must disgust every one whose judgment is not warped by party, because of its party tone. . . . The statesman who has to speak in public should speak the truth, and nothing but the truth, to both sides. Only by so doing can he help both parties to a clear and just perception of those ideas which are of vital moment, and on which alone whatever ought to be based on peace, justice, and law, can with safety be based. With you in England, Sir Robert may call the result of this motion "a most curious instance in Parliamentary history," but to us here the Ministerial apprehensions can only appear to be thoroughly unfounded, and the whole case a most childish incident in Parliamentary warfare.

'From such occurrences your Royal Highness will reap

the lesson, that storms, which have a threatening aspect in Parliament, must be estimated very differently by the Sovereign and by yourself from what they are by the Ministry or by the leader of the Opposition. These last are situated altogether so differently, that their means of forming a just conclusion are peculiarly affected by that fact, and their prognosis on a critical state of circumstances, therefore, resembles nothing so closely as that of a timorous or wary physician, who always holds it prudent to prepare himself and others for the worst emergency.'

On the 23rd of July Parliament was prorogued by the Queen in person, on which occasion the new House of Lords, then only recently completed, presented an unusually brilliant appearance. The affairs of Ireland again occupied the chief place in Her Majesty's Speech, which concluded with announcing the immediate dissolution of Parliament. The elections commenced at the end of the month, and resulted in leaving the state of parties very much as it had been in the previous Parliament. There was no prominent question on which to appeal to the country, about which either party could rouse the enthusiasm of its adherents. Upon the whole it was doubtful, whether the Government had not lost rather than gained by the dissolution, as not only had several of their number lost their seats, but the new Parliament contained a greater body of independent members, whose votes, although generally available to the Government, could not always be relied upon in an emergency.

On the 5th of August the Prince writes to Baron Stockmar: 'Here the elections are pretty well over. The City has elected four Liberals, including Lord John and Rothschild. Macaulay, Hobhouse, Hawes, and General Fox have lost their seats, which places the Government in a position of great embarrassment. Hobhouse has been supplanted by

Fergus O'Connor, the Chartist. The new Parliament is very Liberal.'

The time for a well-earned holiday had now come. Scotland was again the country to which the Queen and Prince looked for recreation and retirement; and on the 11th of August they embarked at Osborne in the Royal yacht. It is rare, indeed, to find the Prince entering in his letters into the details of his journeys, or giving expression to the delight with which, in the course of these, every feature of beauty and interest was sure to be observed by him and to have attention called to it. The following letter is, however, an exception, and will, therefore, be read with peculiar interest.[11]

'Dear Stockmar,—We embarked on the evening of the 11th opposite Osborne, our party being composed of—Victoria and myself, the two eldest children, with Miss Hildyard, Charles (Prince of Leiningen), the Duke and Duchess of Norfolk, Lady Jocelyn, General Wemyss, Captain Gordon, and Sir James Clark. We dropped down to Yarmouth, as the sailors say, the same evening, and there we slept. Next morning about four we ran out, but owing to the mist made only two miles. Towards eight o'clock a second attempt to get out towards the Atlantic was successful. A ground-swell forced two-thirds of those on board—the ladies and children, with some exceptions, included—to resign themselves to sea-sickness. To my everlasting credit, I stood my ground with Charles, thanks to following steadily the advice of Sir Charles Napier (the Admiral), "to take a glass of port wine," and I stood it until we disembarked at Fort William. The sick folks decided to abandon the expedition to Falmouth, and we ran into Dartmouth, as we did with you last year. On the 13th we went with the same swell and mist to the Scilly Islands, where we passed the night, after a walk to the Star

[11] Her Majesty's account of the excursion has already been made public in *Leaves from a Journal.*

Castle at St. Mary's. Lord Adolphus was very glad we saw the islands, and gave vent to his feelings in the remark, "That is a very good thing over; I should think you will never care to see them again."

'On the 14th we started at 4 A.M., and made land first in Milford Haven. I inspected the Pembroke Dockyard, and drove as far as Pembroke to see the fine old Castle. On the 15th we left South Wales, and about noon arrived opposite the Isle of Anglesea in sight of Snowdon, and the glorious Welsh mountains. Here we left the "Victoria and Albert" to make the unpleasant run to Holyhead, whilst we ourselves made our way through the Menai Straits in the "Fairy," attended by the "Garland," with Smithett on the left, and old Hamilton on the right paddle-box. We passed Caernarvon Castle and Plâs Newydd. I went on shore and examined the famous chain bridge. We anchored before Beaumaris. I landed in Bangor, and made in a comical equipage an expedition to Penrhyn Castle, a magnificent place. We regained the yacht in the Cross Roads, where we passed the night.

'On the 16th we saw land first in the Isle of Man, where we ran into the Bays of Douglas and Ramsay; our anchorage for the night was Loch Ryan in Wigtonshire, a large bay open to the north-west. The 17th brought us into the wonderfully beautiful region of the Western Islands of Scotland. We halted half an hour before the majestic Ailsa Craig (which rises 1,000 feet out of the sea), and tried to get a shot at the millions of Solan geese which inhabit it, and which we scared from their haunts by several cannon-shot. They enveloped us like a cloud, but at a distance out of range of shot, calculated with almost mathematical precision.

'The grand outline of the island of Arran, of which Ch. A. Murray had often told us, soon compensated us for the failure of our sportsmanship. We sailed through Lamlash

Bay, inside of Holy Island, and then through Brodick Bay, where Lord and Lady Douglas's romantic castle lies. Our course then took us towards the island of Bute, and past the little islands of Great Cumbray and Little Cumbray, where the clergyman prays, "Lord Almighty protect the inhabitants of Great Cumbray and Little Cumbray, and of the neighbouring Isles of Great Britain and Ireland!" then up the Firth of Clyde to Greenock, where we again got on board the "Fairy," and sailed on, pursued, in the literal sense of the word, by upwards of 40 steamers, towards Dumbarton. There we landed, and climbed the ancient Castle, of which our picture in Osborne gives a most faithful representation. On our way back we passed Greenock, and up the quite uniquely beautiful Loch Long, and down again, and again steamed back to the main portion of our fleet in Rothsay Bay, isle of Bute. Here the people were as much rejoiced to see the Duke of Rothsay as the Welsh were to salute the Prince of Wales on their native ground. The good people of the Isle of Man put in their paper, that I led the Prince Regent by the hand! Usually one has a Regent for an infant; but in Man it seems to be precisely the reverse.

'On the 18th we steamed through the Kyles of Bute, and then up Loch Fyne to Inverary, where we enjoyed a Highland welcome and a good luncheon with the Argyles. What a superb situation! On the way back we ran into Loch Gilp, —all this in the "Fairy." The "Victoria and Albert" had in the meanwhile steamed round the Mull of Cantyre to Loch Crinan, where we rejoined her after passing through the Crinan Canal in a boat triumphantly decorated, drawn by handsomely dressed jockeys, and accompanied by the whole Highland population on foot. We halted for the night at Loch Crinan.

'On the 19th we proceeded through a maze of islands, of which the prettiest are Luing, Kerrera, and Lismore, to the

north, passing Oban, a charming spot, thence across to the Island of Mull, through the Sound of Mull into the open sea, the islands of Rum, Muck, Coll, and Tiree visible in the distance. We made straight for Staffa, and were able, thanks to the splendid weather, which was uninterruptedly kind to us after we left the Scillys, to run into Fingal's Cave, in the Royal barge, with the Royal standard flying. On me the cave produced a most romantic impression, on the ladies a very "eerie" and uncomfortable one. With a view to tracing the basaltic formation more closely, I scrambled on foot for some time up and down the island. We were, however, forced to make haste, having still to visit Iona, and afterwards to return to the Sound of Mull, as the clouds were already beginning to blow up from the south-west.

'In Iona I visited the ruins of the remarkable early Christian Churches. On the 20th we left Tobermory in the Sound of Mull, and sailed up the Linnhe Loch to our final anchorage at Fort William. The time admitted of my making an expedition with Charles to Loch Leven, and thence, half on foot, half by carriage, we ascended the Pass of Glencoe, famous and infamous for the Massacre of the Macdonalds. Yesterday, the 21st, we landed and came to this remote and desolate, but wildly beautiful Loch Laggan, under a persistent Scotch mist.

'Here I close my chronicle, but let me not conclude my letter without the expression of my heartfelt wish for the improvement of your health.

'Ardverikie, Loch Laggan, 22nd August, 1847.

CHAPTER XX.

THE 'persistent Scotch mist' which enveloped the country round Loch Laggan on the arrival of the Royal guests, was only exchanged during the greater part of their stay at Ardverikie for the more transparent, though scarcely less disagreeable veil of steady rain. 'The view from the windows,' says the Queen the next day (*Leaves from a Journal*), 'as I now write, though obscured by rain, is very beautiful and extremely wild.' A few days later the tone of the same record becomes almost despairing. 'There is little to say of our stay at Ardverikie; the country is very fine, but the weather most dreadful.' But the worst weather in a mountainous country has its gleams of grandeur or beauty; and sullen skies and stormy showers can never wholly mar the charm of a Highland retreat so finely placed, or of the free and simple life which is possible within it. The storm might howl without, but there were happy hearts and busy brains within to make the hours pass swiftly, and not without some freight of pleasantness.

The Prince's birthday (26th August) brought with it the accustomed tokens of regard in gifts from the many (far and near) that loved him, and it was celebrated with the honours of a Highland gathering. The next day he writes to the Duchess of Kent:—

'I have to thank you for two dear letters, and for very beautiful presents which reached me yesterday by Victoria's hand, and delighted me greatly. The glass vases are indeed

extremely fine, and so also are the Statuettes of the Consoling and Avenging Angels.

'Victoria has written to you with full particulars of our journey, and Charles has also described portions of it, so you will not expect me to do more than express in general terms that we have truly had immense enjoyment of nature, and that the trouble is well repaid of visiting the west coast of Scotland. I must also confess that the reporter was right when he said, "The Prince looked pleased with everything, and everybody, and with himself too." Is not that a happy state?

'Ardverikie,[1] which you will probably not trust yourself to pronounce, is very lovely and wild, and is a thorough Highland retreat. The reporters call it an "un-come-at-able place," because they are quartered on the other side of Loch Laggan, which is only to be crossed on a flying bridge, that belongs exclusively to ourselves.

'The children are well and happy. Yesterday, my twenty-eighth birthday, we had a Highland gathering, at which there were all sorts of ancient games of a warlike kind. Now I conclude, in peaceful wise, calling myself

'Your devoted Son,

'ALBERT.'

'Ardverikie, 27th August, 1847.'

It will be seen by the following letters, written a few days later to Baron Stockmar, that in migrating to the Highlands the Prince had only changed the scene of those unremitting political studies which were now absorbing his attention, and in which his aspirations for a United Germany played not the least prominent part:—

'Dear Stockmar,—You can have only two words to-day

[1] The shooting lodge of Ardverikie was destroyed by fire 17th October, 1873. At the time of the Queen's visit it belonged to Lord Henry Bentinck, and was rented by Lord Abercorn.

to tell you that we are well, that whenever we stir out we come home almost frozen, and always wet to the skin, that the grouse are wild, and the deer very hard to be got at, despite all which we are still very happy.

'I am deep in German politics with Charles, who understands them *à fond*, and we write Memorandums with a view to the strengthening of German unity by means of a living Union (*Bund*), and keep pounding away at Austria as the main obstruction.

'In European politics that Power is likely to bring us into a frightful complication in Italy. We can see the storm brewing. I am strongly of opinion that England should declare betimes, that it *will not endure* that independent States should be forcibly prevented from setting about such internal reforms as they shall think for their advantage. This appears to me the sound basis for us, *vis-à-vis* of Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. We are frequently inclined to plunge States into Constitutional reforms towards which they have no inclination. This I hold to be *quite wrong* (*vide* Spain, Portugal, Greece), although it is Lord Palmerston's hobby; but, on the other hand, I maintain that England's true position is to be the defence and support (*die Schutzmacht*) of States whose independent development is sought to be impeded from without.

'Ardverikie, 2nd September, 1847.'

'Dear Stockmar,—We are still in Ardverikie, and still it rains and blows, nay, it has even snowed more than once. Under this experience Clark finds the Western Highlands "rather humid." Charles has left us to look after the duties of his post in Munich. Lord Grey has been relieved by Lord Palmerston. I have been at pains to form a closer acquaintance with the former, which in travelling together can easily be done, as your experience will remind you. Just

as little as you found me "so unmanageable" about coffee as people would have made you believe, did I find Lord Grey untractable upon great political questions: on the contrary, there was not one principle contended for by him (and he *has* principles, which is more than can be said of all the statesmen of the day) to which I would not cheerfully subscribe. He is very positive in his views, fond of discussion, and sticks very firmly to his opinions, but he is quite open to argument, and, if worsted, is ready to own it at once, and to adopt the argument by which he was overthrown. "Yes, yes, I was wrong, I see," he will say, the moment he is shown to have been in error. . . .

'Lord Palmerston acts less upon principle: still, obstinate although he is, he always gives in when driven into a corner by argument.

'The political horizon grows darker and darker. Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal are in a state of ferment. I have worked out a long Memorandum for Lord John Russell, which I should like to show you, in which I have tried to define the position of England with reference to the movements of Liberalism in Europe.

'In Lisbon a Ministry has at last been constructed, composed of nullities, *item*, they are conformable to Protocol, as they belong neither to the Junta nor to the Cabralists proper, and so things are kept in the right groove. . . . I hear that Ferdinand is unwell, and needs the air of Cintra, and says, if this Ministry too miscarry, he does not know what will happen.

'Ardverikie, 11th September, 1847.'

It was not without cause that the Prince expressed himself so strongly as to the sombre aspect of the political horizon. The immediate difficulty in Portugal had been got over in the way indicated in this letter, but things there were still

far from being established on a basis likely to prove permanently satisfactory. In Spain, the differences between the young Queen and her government had reached such a crisis that an abdication had become imminent, and was being forced on by the partisans of the French within the country. It is, however, due to Louis Philippe to say, that this was wholly contrary to his wishes. Switzerland was on the brink of a civil war. Austria was bent upon crushing the spirit of reform which was abroad and active in Italy.

With the view of strengthening the hands of Pope Pius IX. in the course of reform on which he had entered, Lord Palmerston intimated a desire to send a confidential representative to Rome, and had indicated Lord Minto, then Lord Privy Seal, for the task. On the 28th of August the Queen was apprised of this wish by a letter from Lord John Russell. The question thus raised was so grave, that Her Majesty and the Prince embodied in the following Memorandum for Lord John Russell the views which presented themselves to them on the first blush of the proposal. It is to this Memorandum the Prince refers in the letter just quoted. In it will be found a fuller development of the sound principle as to the true attitude of England towards the internal reforms of other European States, stated by the Prince in his letter to Baron Stockmar of the 2nd of September, above quoted.

Memorandum by the Prince on Italian Affairs.[2]

'Ardverikie, 29th August. 1847.

'The progress of Liberal institutions and the establishment of Constitutional Government in Italy is (and not without justice) considered by Austria as an affair of life and death

[2] It is scarcely necessary to state that this Memorandum and all other papers and correspondence addressed to English statesmen by the Prince and quoted in this work were in English.

to herself, and will therefore be opposed by her almost at any risk, and with all her might. We must not conceal from ourselves, that sending a mission to Rome with the avowed or apparent object of supporting and encouraging the Pope in those measures of political reform which Austria has reason to dread so much is *a most hostile step* towards our old and natural ally.

'What is it we apprehend? That Austria might be tempted to commit an open assault upon her neighbour, in order to prevent her carrying out her political changes, should advice and remonstrance not succeed in stopping them. Is it the right remedy on our part for preventing this palpable breach of the laws of nations and the complications arising out of it, to urge the Pope to defy Austria, and not to let himself be intimidated? Or will it not be more to the purpose, and certainly more honest and friendly, to address ourselves to her, and to say:—"We have no hand in what is going on in Italy; though we think the Italians are acting wisely, we have not lent them any assistance. But we consider that every independent State has a perfect right to manage its own internal affairs, and that if Sovereign and people in a State are united in their determination to introduce certain reforms, and another State attempts an armed invasion to stop these reforms, merely because it considers them dangerous to the maintenance of its own established system of government, we shall look upon that act as an act of aggression upon the independence of the other State, which Europe and the Powers who signed the Treaty of Vienna cannot look upon with indifference."

'This step ought to be taken as *quickly* and as *openly* as possible, in order, first, to come in time, and, secondly, that the whole of Europe should know that *this* is the straightforward, moderate, but determined line which England takes, and which is based upon such justice and fairness

that it ought to be followed by all other countries. I should propose that a note to this effect be sent to Vienna (containing at the same time the full acknowledgment of the right, on the part of Austria, to take in her *own* States all the precautions she pleases to maintain her own institutions), and that copies of this note should be sent simultaneously to all Courts of Europe.

'This would be a bold course to pursue, and one pledging us, to a certain degree, to a future struggle for the independence of Italy, while the sending a mission to Rome commits us to nothing. But if taken *in time*, this step will most likely prevent the complication we dread, and which, when it arises, will perhaps not allow us to remain silent spectators, whilst the other course will be very hostile and irritating to Austria, without holding out any prospect of preventing a collision. The bold declaration of England for the right of independent States to manage their own internal affairs according to their own views, will make her most popular all over the Continent, and particularly in Germany, where the same national improvements are arrested or impeded by the same interference on the part of Austria. It will likewise serve as a basis to our policy with respect to Switzerland, where the question at issue is again the same, whilst the *diplomatic support* given to the Pope will give additional strength to the prevalent accusation against us, that we are for selfish purposes trying to disseminate disorder and anarchy in all other States under the name of liberty, which was the course the French Jacobins pursued, and in support of which accusation our position with regard to Greece, Portugal, and Spain is adduced in connection with the miseries of those countries.

'What will be Lord Minto's position at Rome? Will he be a Minister accredited to the Pope, or a member of the British Cabinet? He will be opposed by the whole Corps

Diplomatique, at the head of which the Austrian Ambassador is supreme, who will be supported (if only underhand) by his French colleague. These two great Catholic Powers have means in their hands to influence the Vatican, which we cannot dream of competing with. The probability is that Lord Minto will have very little real influence, and will be made responsible for every act of a doubtful nature, and of which he may have been totally ignorant.

'Has the question of sending Lord Minto been considered with reference to our internal policy? To hold communion with the See of Rome is held to be *criminal* by the law of England. This law is absurd, and I believe public opinion to be ripe for its repeal, but still it exists. Hitherto its evasion has been winked at, and the diplomatic intercourse has been carried on by the means of an Attaché to the Florence Legation residing at Rome. The Lord Privy Seal of England, however, is too great a person to be overlooked. He may be supposed to travel as a private individual: still, a Cabinet Minister leaving his office to travel to Rome for his amusement is too improbable a story, and the great excitement the step will cause in and out of England will materially affect his incognito.

'Lord John Russell says, "In case Lord Minto would consent to go, it will be necessary to define strictly our intentions." It will be *absolutely necessary* to have these defined intentions before one, to be able to give a final decision as to whether the mission will be advisable or not—a question of very grave importance.'

(Initialled) 'A.'

In his reply to the letter sending this Memorandum, Lord John Russell assured Her Majesty that the views expressed in it entirely coincided with the course of conduct which Lord Palmerston and himself had agreed to recommend to Her

Majesty. He also wrote to the Prince to the same effect, and his letter elicited the following reply:—

'Ardverikie, 5th September, 1847.

'My dear Lord John—Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd. I am very glad that my Memorandum should coincide so entirely with your own views on the Italian question, and that you had in fact settled upon all that we thought desirable. The suddenness of your proposition about Lord Minto startled us, and we thought it therefore right to let you know at once our opinions, not knowing what the objects were you had in view.

'Our policy towards Italy has hitherto been a passive or negative one, on general principles of European policy, preferring Austrian supremacy to French supremacy. We now enter upon an independent line, and one which will not admit of our remaining passive any longer. It is therefore desirable that the first step, which will give the impulse and direction to the rest for times to come should be the right one: I mean one based upon the principles of justice and moderation, and intelligible to all Europe. I think further, that *this* is the right moment and opportunity for correcting a great many misapprehensions existing about the object of English policy in general, and of setting this in its true light before the world as an explanation of the past, and a declaration for the future which will enable all governments and nations to understand what they have to expect from us.

'My notion is this:—

'England has, by her own energies and the fortunate circumstances in which she has been placed, acquired a start in civilisation, liberty, and prosperity over all other countries. Her popular institutions are most developed and perfected, and she has run through a development which the other

countries will yet in succession have to pass through. England's mission, duty, and interest is, to put herself at the head of the diffusion of civilisation, and the attainment of liberty. Let her mode of acting, however, be that of fostering and protecting every effort made by a State to advance in that direction, but not of pressing upon any State an advance which is not the result of its own impulse. Civilisation and liberal institutions must be of organic growth, and of national development, if they are to prosper and lead to the happiness of a people. Any stage in that development missed, any jump made in it, is sure to lead to confusion, and to retard that very development which we desire. Institutions not answering the state of society for which they are intended *must work ill*, even if those institutions should be better than the state that society is in. Let England, therefore, be careful (in her zeal for progress) not to push any nation beyond its own march, and not to *impose* upon any nation what that nation does not itself *produce*; but let her declare herself the protector and friend of all States engaged in progress, and let them acquire that confidence in England, that she will, if necessary, defend them at her own risk and expense. This will give her the most powerful moral position that any country ever maintained.

'In Greece, Spain, and Portugal, matters have become so complicated, and the intrigues of other countries, which we may have been obliged to meet with similar weapons, have led us so far, that they have made us deviate from the principle I have just laid down. The result proves that this deviation cannot take place with impunity, and that the return for all our zeal is hatred, and the *general belief* that we are disseminating disorder in those countries for selfish purposes. Italy and Germany are yet intact, and are of their own accord progressing in the direction of liberty and civilisation. They

are threatened openly by Austria and Russia, and behind them and underhand by France.

'An open avowal of the principles above enunciated, and this communicated to all the Courts of Europe, appears, therefore, the step at this moment called for on the part of England, and most in character with our position and interest. A direction should at the same time be given to our diplomatic agents, that they are to take that principle as a guide for their conduct. . . .

'I have shown Lord Palmerston this letter, with the contents of which he says he agrees. He thinks that Lord Minto's instructions might properly contain the outlines of our policy.'

It does not appear that the documents just cited were ever communicated to Baron Stockmar; but they were certainly of a kind to satisfy him that his beloved pupil had disciplined himself to good purpose for his great position. Of this the Baron was becoming every day more and more assured; but, while his satisfaction breaks out in words of warm praise, he omits no opportunity of stimulating the Prince to further effort, and to ever higher aims. We find this well illustrated in the following charming letter:—

'My dear Prince,—I see in the papers an announcement that the Royal travellers are about to return from Scotland by land. This sets my imagination at rest, for we had storms here on the 17th and 18th of this month, which must have been frightful at sea. And now to your Royal Highness yourself.

'Your letters are continuous proofs of that inward mental development, which is the special problem of your life. How happy this makes me, you will easily picture, knowing what you do of my love for you, and of my turn of mind. Let your unceasing study, your unceasing occupation, be

human nature in all its length and breadth, and consider politics only as the means of doing service, as far as in you lies, to the whole human race. Never shirk industry and hard work, and stick to the rule, *Nulla dies sine lineâ.* Strive to guard as much as possible against too great distraction, and to recur constantly from the petty details into which you must be daily drawn to the breadth of view, the certainty, the productiveness, that result from guiding principles. Strive by your own meditations to satisfy yourself—that there is no such thing as Chance. There are but two threads on which all things hang, whether they be clear and simple, or obscure and intricate, or even confused. These are (1) the eternal, immutable law of Natural Necessity, and (2) man's Free Will, which latter is restricted to an apparently very narrow sphere, but yet can and does do much more than the thoughtless have any idea of. No doubt, I must admit, that the freedom of the human will is limited to the choice between what a man is forced to regard as good, and what he cannot fail to regard as evil, but in this choice he is unfettered, and it seems to me, *that the choice of the good has been made so difficult,* ONLY *to give a higher value to man, and to the choice he makes.*

'Your Royal Highness's judgment on the character of Lord Grey seems to me very just. With natures such as his it is possible to establish a personal relation. You cannot fail to secure his esteem and confidence if you show by your acts, as time goes on, that you possess the quality of moral earnestness, and that your own truthfulness of nature will not permit you to make light of whatever is true, great, good, and beautiful. For it is only the belief in a man's moral earnestness, that will gain for him credit and friends; and credit and friends are indispensable to your Royal Highness's political success. That God may shield and strengthen you will to my dying hour be my ceaseless wish

and prayer. And now God bless your Royal Highness, our dear Queen, and all the Royal Family! Whatever happens, do not forget me, but keep me in unbroken friendly remembrance, as well as the years I passed so happily with your Royal Highness.

'20th September, 1847.'

On the 17th of September the Queen left Ardverikie on her return to England. Prince Albert had gone to Inverness the day before, and met Her Majesty at Fort William, to which he had travelled by way of Lochness and the Caledonian Canal. Under persistently bad weather the route homewards was resumed, and continued by sea as far as Liverpool, and thence by railway to London. Despite the wretched weather the Prince had been able to get some shooting in the intervals of work at Ardverikie, made unusually heavy by the peculiarly critical state of European politics, and the mass of communications from all sides, which claimed the close attention of Her Majesty and himself. But in this, as in other things, he was in the habit of exercising great self-denial. 'Really, when one thinks,' says the Queen, writing to her uncle from Ardverikie on the 7th of September, 'of the very dull life, and particularly the life of self-denial, which Albert leads, he deserves every amusement. And even about his amusements he is so accommodating, that I am deeply touched by it. He is very fond of shooting, but it is all with the greatest moderation.'

Of their stay at Ardverikie Her Majesty says in the same letter—'I love this place dearly, and particularly the quiet, simple, and wild life we lead here, in spite of the abominable weather we have had.' The expression of some natural regret at having to forego its freedom for the constraints of Court life appears to have escaped the Queen in writing after her return to her sister, the Princess of Hohenlohe.

How true, how delicate in feeling and expression, is the language of the Princess's reply![3]

'Langenburg, 27th September, 1847.

'. . . . I well understand your having been sorry to leave the Highlands. Not only that style of country, but the way of living there, was agreeable to you. I know that well from experience, coming home after a time of delightful independence. One feels so shut in on all sides, so tame. By degrees the old habits and occupations overcome that feeling. But there still remains a yearning after what is past, and which seldom comes again just so. That is life! and makes one feel very sad at times. With me it is not the feeling of sadness at the running down of life, year after year, but that everything which gives one pleasure, and is beautiful, should pass away like everything else, leaving only recollection as a mark of its having been there. . . . I am becoming very resigned to what gives me pain or pleasure. Not that I feel it less, but I am not afraid of things that give me pain; I have become so accustomed to it of late.'

[3] This letter is extracted, by permission, from a volume printed by Her Majesty for strictly private circulation, entitled *Letters of Feodora, Princess of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, from* 1828 *to* 1872. 1874. The letters, which are all in English, are exclusively addressed to Her Majesty.

CHAPTER XXI.

The condition of Germany had for some time engaged much of the Prince's attention, and the confidential relation in which he stood towards the King of Prussia, by whom his judgment was held in high esteem, had led to the free interchange of ideas between them as to the measures best fitted to satisfy the growing demand for the establishment of popular institutions, and at the same time bring about such harmony of policy and action among the numerous individual States as would build up one great and united nation, able to take a potential place in European Councils. While at Ardverikie, as the Prince mentions in a letter above quoted (*supra*, p. 426), he had gone deep into the details of the question with the late Prince Leiningen, and had put his ideas into the form of a Memorandum, with the view of its being submitted to the King of Prussia. Although the problem, which then and for long afterwards occupied the thoughts of the ablest men in Germany, has been settled, within the last few years, by events which came in a form and succession not one of them could have foreseen, this Memorandum is too valuable, as illustrating the character of the Prince's mind, and the breadth and liberality of his political opinions, to require any apology for its reproduction here.

Memorandum on German Affairs by Prince Albert.

'Ardverikie, 11th September, 1847.

'It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the fact that Germany regards her present condition as one of development and of transition into another, of the precise nature of which few persons form any clear idea for themselves. No one who has followed the movements of the German press and the other movements of the German people and politics for the last thirty years will deny this for a moment, or hesitate at the same time to admit, that public opinion in Germany has two main objects in view—

'1. The establishment of popular forms of government.

'2. The construction of an United Germany.

'Of German statesmen and politicians some will share and countenance only the first, others only the second of these aims, while many will condemn both, but all will acknowledge them as actual facts, and most (whether themselves favourable or the reverse) will recognise in these inclinations of the public mind a power which will make itself be felt, sooner or later, according as circumstances may or may not be favourable.

'I will not here dwell upon the development of the forms of government into such as will secure to the people a larger share in the administration of their own affairs, or, in a word, into constitutional forms, but merely express my own conviction that this development is advancing with rapid strides, and will very shortly become an accomplished fact, and that, moreover, simultaneously with the establishment of popular activity in politics, the yearning for German unity will not merely be increased, but the means will also be provided for its attainment.

'In view of this unmistakable tendency of the German

public mind it becomes German Sovereigns and German Governments to consider how such a direction shall be given to it, as that it may not merely not do mischief either to the country as a whole, or to the separate individual life of the different federal States, but be even productive of good to both, and so this powerful current be guided to its outfall, bearing blessings on its way.

'It was only after the great disasters of 1805 and 1806 that the unity of Germany came to be felt as an essential want by the German people; later on, after a period of lengthened prostration, it gave rise to an epoch of national glory, and it is now also acknowledged by all the federal States and Governments to be indispensable with reference to means of defence against attacks from without. On the other hand, as regards the political, commercial, intellectual, and, in a word, the inner unity of Germany, the most contradictory and hazy views prevail both as to the necessity for it, as well as to how it is to be brought about, and yet the strength of that unity towards the outside world, which is acknowledged to be essential, will always be no more than a reflex of the strength of this inner unity about which there is so much dispute.

'The question, then, is:—

'"Where are we to look for aid? By what road is this unity to be reached? And by what means so as to be productive of permanent good?"

'It may be assumed as a general principle in the solution of all political questions, that the organic development of what actually exists offers a better prospect for the achievement of a future really healthy condition, than the construction of a future out of some abstract and therefore arbitrary theory, however closely such theory may approximate the absolute ideal of perfection.

'The *status quo*, then, in Germany shows us a multitude

of different States, complete in themselves, with their Sovereigns, Governments, Chambers, and international relations, and with their only point of union in the German Diet, as that was established, after the dissolution of the Empire and of the partial Rhine-Bund, as the representative of German nationality and unity. Its fundamental purpose was the individual independence and unfettered vitality of the separate States, combined with the advancement of the welfare of Germany as a nation. At present it is dead, a symbol rather than a reality, disowned as an authority by the individual States, and a byword with the German people for its inactivity and weakness. If we seek for the causes of the decline of this solitary German national institution, there are two which chiefly present themselves:—

'1. The mutual jealousy of the different Governments, and the mistaken idea of the different Sovereigns, that submission to the decrees of an active confederation might derogate from their sovereign authority.

'2. Austria, a State composed less of German than of non-German elements, whose policy is governed by other than German interests and views, and whose system of government is so wholly based upon stagnation that it cannot hold out a hand to progress of any kind, without shattering its own foundations, continues, by virtue of its retaining as rulers the old German Imperial House, to play the most influential part in the Diet; and on account of its palpably Conservative bias is regarded by the smaller German States as their protection and shield. Austria impedes and stifles every living impulse of the Diet, and, in its disgust at this, Germany is tempted to regard the Diet itself as the chief obstacle to German unity. Nevertheless, if we look closely into the matter, it becomes apparent, that it is after all within the Diet itself that the only means are to be found for effecting this unity peacefully and legally, and in a way to

avoid the most frightful convulsions. Let this be but adopted once and for all as a general principle, and it will not be very difficult to carry it into effect, and at the same time to get rid of both the obstructive agencies to which I have referred.

'The diminution of their sovereign authority, which rulers have hitherto apprehended from the Diet, has already in a great measure become a fact, through the development of constitutional systems, and the Princes should therefore see in the Diet a safeguard for their sovereignty, rather than an additional danger. At the same time, by the unconditional recognition of a federal supremacy they would meet the wishes of the representatives of the people, who, under the impulse of a strong national sentiment, demand the subjection of individual to those national German interests which are or ought to be represented by the Diet. Moreover, the Sovereigns, for want of a German union, have already conceded their supremacy in one of its most important points, when they put themselves, as they had to do, under the tutelage of Prussia, by becoming parties to the Zollverein. From all these considerations it should not be difficult for the German Sovereigns to arrive at the conclusion, that in every way, instead of losing influence and power by strengthening the Diet, they are much more likely to gain for themselves the position which they desire.

'If the German States are agreed on this point, then Austria, and Austria alone, remains as the impediment to a development of the Diet, and in this development Austria neither will nor can take any part. Nevertheless, the separation of Austria from the Diet would be a dissolution of the Bund itself, and would sensibly weaken the strength of Germany as against the rest of Europe. It therefore becomes important to devise some plan which will combine a German development within the Bund with the retention of Austria as a member of it, and the protection, at the same

time, of German interests against the repressive and stifling influence of Austria. The most direct way to this end would be for the Governments to send as their representatives to the Frankfort Diet the most eminent men of their respective dominions, so as to concentrate in one place the quintessence of the intelligence and practical local knowledge of each several State. In addition to this, the Governments should entrust to their representatives in Frankfort the bulk of the transactions which they at present negotiate by sending ambassadors to each other. It is obvious that these men would introduce greater unity into public business, and especially, standing there as they would do upon a German platform and face to face with the representatives of the other federal States, they would not readily lose sight of the bearing of questions on the general interests of Germany, as well as upon those of particular States. Let all Congresses, which at present are convened and commissioned by single States, now at one place, now at another—such as those about railways, shipping dues, coinage, exchanges, criminal codes, public education, &c., be convened once for all at Frankfort, and held under the direction of the representative delegates, to whom deputies may be attached. It is obvious at a glance that the immediate advantage of this centralised transaction of public business will be simplicity and economy, but the chief advantage of it will be, that this Congress will be *German*, even although only a certain number of the German States take part in it, and because, having their delegates present on the spot, it will be made easy for the other States to take immediate cognisance of the objects of any special Conferences, and afterwards to enter them at any time, if so authorised, and take part in their deliberations.

'The mention of this Congress brings me to the greatest and most important of partial unions, *i.e.* the Prussian-German Zollverein. With this a beginning should be made

and the example given. Instead of the yearly Congresses in Stuttgardt, Carlsruhe, Erfurt, Leipzig, &c. &c., which have hitherto been convened irregularly, and to which each State that belongs to the union sends its deputy (now this, now that), let there be erected in Frankfort a permanent Zollverein Commission, composed of the delegates of the respective States, supported, if necessary, by experts and professional men. For these deputies may be selected from the Chambers of the different States. Let this permanent Commission deal continuously with all questions of German excise and commerce; a step the importance and utility of which will be obvious to all. Then, if all German life be concentrated in Frankfort, all international questions between the German States will be discussed and settled there, and thus much work will be done that will be of the most salutary effect for Germany, in which Austria will take no part, and by which it will not be affected. But if any such plan of convocation becomes so general that all the federal States and Austria also take part in it, this will be forthwith submitted to the Diet, and thus become a federal law.

'In this way it is made possible for individual States to advance, united one with the other, and without check, in the path of German development, and so soon as an onward step in this development is generally conceded, to exchange its character of a private convention into a resolution binding for the entire German Confederation.

'Supposing one of these unions to be incorporated into the Bund (a railway union, for example, which appears to me specially important and necessary), then let a Commission established *pro hâc vice* be permanently attached to the Diet, for the purpose of dealing with the points of detail. A good model is furnished in the Military Commission, which has been already attached to the Diet, which is composed of experts, and is invested by the Diet with a definite

authority. The Military Commission has secured for itself general appreciation, and as yet no State has complained of its undue encroachments. I propose that similar Commissions should be formed for railways, navigation, highways, weights, measures, and currency, and also for all that relates to passports and police.

'Now, if I turn to the Diet itself, which, being established in the same immediate locality, must necessarily be affected by these institutions, I find that there was a particular rule laid down when it was first established, which rule has been subsequently withdrawn, or at least fallen into disuse (and the paralysed condition of the Diet dates from that period), I mean the rule of giving publicity to all its transactions. The moment this rule is again adopted—which I believe Austria cannot prevent—the Diet will once more regain its vitality. For it is comparatively unimportant whether certain resolutions be actually adopted or not; the public deliberation upon every important German question must exercise an immense influence upon public opinion in Germany; so, on the other hand, this public opinion cannot fail to react upon these deliberations, and even in the long run to compel Austria to take a part in German development for its own safety and welfare.

'From the adoption of these propositions I look for the following results:—

'1. The German States to be rightly represented in the Diet.

'2. All their transactions *inter se* to be carried on only at the place of meeting, and by the personal constituents, of the Diet.

'3. All national German movements to be directed from this common centre.

'4. The great commercial interest especially to be permanently represented there.

'5. The Diet to be put in a position to absorb within itself every individual movement which may menace its unity, and thus to constitute itself the representative of all important interests, whereby the foundation will at the same time be laid for a central administration.

'6. The Diet to be recalled to life by restoring publicity to its deliberations, and to be brought into reciprocal relations with the German people; and all this without endangering any existing interests, or impeding the development which is everywhere demanded by the spirit of the age.

'The question next arises, How to give life to this scheme? My own view is that the political reformation of Germany lies entirely in the hands of Prussia, and that Prussia has only to will, in order to accomplish these results. Prussia is next to Austria the most powerful State in Germany. Prussia by the legislative measures of the 3rd of February has placed herself at the head of the development of German popular institutions, Prussia has for many years stood at the head of the Zollverein, and on Prussia the political expectations of all Germany are concentrated. If Prussia were really to adopt the plan of reform here chalked out, and to carry it out steadily and fearlessly, she would become the leading and directing power in Germany, which other Governments and people would have to follow, and in this way would come to be regarded as one of the most important European powers, seeing that in the European scale she would weigh as Prussia *plus* Germany. If, on the other hand, she declines to undertake the guidance of a moderate and systematic German development, then the vital forces of the nation driven onwards by the pressure of the times will find some irregular vent for themselves, and produce convulsions of all sorts, the final issue of which no human power can foresee.'

(Signed) 'ALBERT.'

The topics of this Memorandum, and also the question of the relations of this country to Germany, seem to have been much discussed between the Prince and Lord Palmerston, who was the Cabinet Minister in attendance on the Queen during the latter part of Her Majesty's stay at Ardverikie. Lord Palmerston embodied his views in a long Memorandum, which bears the date of 'Laggan, 16th September, 1847,' a few days later than that by the Prince. In this the advantages of a close political alliance between England and Germany are strongly recognised. 'Geographical reasons,' it states, 'prevent England, and ethnical reasons prevent Germany, from aiming at territorial aggrandisement; neither, therefore, can wish to subjugate any neighbours, but both have a common interest in preventing any neighbour from subjugating them. Both England and Germany are threatened by the same danger and from the same quarters. That danger is an attack from Russia or from France separately, or from Russia and from France united. . . . While Nicholas reigns in Russia and Louis Philippe in France, personal feelings and political opinions, which are still stronger than traditional policy, will prevent such an alliance; but a state of things may be supposed in which such an alliance would be the natural tendency of events.'

Lord Palmerston considered the danger of such a combination more serious for Germany than for England, which, by the strength of its fleet, might defy it singlehanded, although it must, at the same time, be much the better for the co-operation of Germany. Germany, attacked in front and rear, would have a portentous task. Even singlehanded, he believed she would defend herself with success, but her difficulties would be very much diminished if she had England for an active ally. 'England and Germany, therefore, have mutually a direct interest in assisting each other to become rich, united, and strong, and there ought not to

be, in the mind of any enlightened man of either country, any feeling of jealousy as to the progress made by the other country in civilisation and prosperity.'

So far as these safe general propositions went, Lord Palmerston was quite in accord with the Prince. But there was another side of the question, which had an obviously preponderating influence on the mind of the British Minister. The Zollverein, or Customs' Union, was an excellent thing, assisting as it did 'the development of German industry, internal commerce, and consequent wealth and prosperity.' But the Zollverein maintained a system of prohibitory duties against English manufactures, which were thereby put at a great disadvantage, and could only be smuggled into the States of the Union, through the Northern States, which had declined to join it. Accordingly, the Memorandum expands into an elaborate dissertation on the futility of all restrictive duties, the object of which, as addressed to the Prince, who was a strong free trader, is not very apparent. All consideration of the gain to Germany, to Europe, or to England, from a strong and united Germany, in intimate alliance with England, drops out of view, and Lord Palmerston sums up his argument by the conclusion, 'that any English Ministry would be thought to have much neglected its duty, and to have sacrificed the commercial interests of the country, if it did not make every proper effort to persuade the States of Northern Germany, who have not joined the Zollverein, to continue to refrain from doing so.' It is as though he had said to the Prince, 'German unity is a very pretty dream. Accomplish it how you can, but if you want to do any real good, get the country persuaded to remove the prohibitory duties on our goods, or England will do her best to keep up the existing divisions.' The question had, however, got beyond a point when its issues could be determined by considerations of this kind.

In writing to Baron Stockmar on the 30th September, the Prince had said, 'I have gone deeply with Charles (Prince Leiningen) into German affairs, and worked out a plan for the regeneration of Germany, which I purpose laying before the King of Prussia.' This appears to have alarmed the Baron, with whom the realisation of German unity had been the cherished purpose of his life, and who dreaded any false step that might delay its accomplishment. His student years had fallen within the period of Germany's deepest degradation. The shame of her defeats, the petty selfishness of the smaller principalities, the grinding domination of Napoleon in his expressed determination 'to cut the wings of the Prussians so closely as to preclude the possibility of their ever again disturbing the French,'[1] the pitiful internal divisions, which strengthened the invader's hands, had made an indelible impression on Stockmar's heart. The time seemed now to be approaching when something might be hoped for towards the attainment of the great end in view. Was the Prince, a comparative stranger to Germany for years, and fettered as he was by ties of birth and of association, the man to discern the trenchant remedies which alone would meet the case? Had Baron Stockmar seen the Prince's Memorandum, his apprehensions would have been dispelled. But it is to the honour of both, that the Baron on the one hand did not scruple to speak out, so frankly as he does in the following letter, his disbelief in the Prince's qualifications for the task he had undertaken, and that the Prince on the other, as will presently be seen, accepted his strictures without a trace of irritation.

In reading the following letter it must be remembered that although, such has been the rapid march of events, the views expressed in it would now be regarded as moderate

[1] Remark of Napoleon to a Russian officer, quoted in *Diaries and Letters of Sir George Jackson*, vol. ii. p. 167.

and even reactionary, in 1847 they would have been denounced as utter treason by most of the men in Germany in whom political power was vested. They are now chiefly interesting as having been addressed to the Prince, and as illustrative of the noble frankness on which the friendship of Baron Stockmar and himself was based:

'15th October, 1847.

'Your Royal Highness tells me you have worked out a plan for the regeneration of the Fatherland, which you think of communicating to the King of Prussia. Whilst the disposition which prompts your endeavours in this direction has my warmest sympathy, I must nevertheless urge upon you not to carry out your intention, except after the most mature deliberation. A prince of your political position ought, as an unvarying rule, to abstain from doing what is superfluous, and consequently unnecessary, because it can do no good. But, above all, he is bound to guard against doing anything which may do harm. Not having seen your Royal Highness's plan, it can of course be only on general grounds that I am apprehensive that to communicate it may involve grave consequences to yourself individually, as well as to the cause itself. In any case it can do no harm if I lose no time in submitting for your consideration what strikes me on the subject.

'The first aim of whoever wishes to come to a conclusive decision on any important subject should be, to make himself thoroughly master of it in all its bearings. To do this effectively, moreover, he ought to take up a standing point, from which he can bring his knowledge and faculties to bear upon the subject with the utmost freedom. Hence in this particular case it is requisite (1) to know thoroughly what really are the wants of the German people, as these have been developed by the course of events; and (2) the aspect, intellectual and sentimental, in which these wants present themselves to the mind of the people generally.

'Here, then, the question arises, Does your Royal Highness possess the requisite knowledge for dealing with the subject thoroughly and to purpose; and also such a standing point as will enable you to give a practical application to your theoretical views? To speak frankly, I feel bound to answer both these questions in the negative. You left the Fatherland eight years since, and when you were very young. How could you have gained a thorough insight into things as they are, or into the country's present and immediately pressing wants? The bare possibility of such knowledge was denied you; and conversations with Prince Charles (Leiningen) could furnish you with only very limited, and probably very one-sided results. Not that, in my doubts as to your qualifications for this task, I am likely to overlook the fact that, with the great advances you have already made in the knowledge of the general political condition of Europe, you would be in a position to form a correct judgment on German affairs both at home and abroad (for my opinion is precisely the reverse). All I doubt is the existence of an intimate knowledge of these affairs, while at the same time I dread your committing the mistake, which you might easily do, of applying to Germany the standard (a just one, in its place) with which your intimate acquaintance with Anglo-European relations has made you familiar, without due regard to the peculiar characteristics of the German people. With this doubt as to your proper qualification, on the score of intimate knowledge of the facts, goes the further apprehension that the standing point which, as a German Prince, you cannot fail to adopt in considering it, will present the subject to you in a cross light, and thereby lead you to distorted views and conclusions. In dealing with the German question, your Royal Highness can scarcely look at it from any other point of view than that of a German Prince; and, however acute and accurate your observation of all details may be, still they cannot

possibly be seen by you but in the colours of German dynastic interests. And it is just this colouring which makes me believe it improbable your Royal Highness should rightly grasp and appreciate the actual present condition and wants of the German people; and still less that you are able to frame any practicable scheme which will meet the exigencies of the case. What, therefore, I anticipate from your Royal Highness on this subject are views and suggestions from the standing point and in the spirit of a German sovereign of great natural gifts, who has, for the last eight years, applied himself, with excellent results, to the study of politics in the High School of London.

'This brings me to a point at which I may with propriety adduce a maxim, and then trace how far its inherent truth is in accord with what I have already said; and whether, if so it be, the doubts I have expressed are thereby confirmed or removed. The maxim is, A statesman can only do great, successful, and truly fertile work, by recognising clearly and betimes the dominant thought, to which the necessary development of humanity in a given people has given birth, by laying hold on it with genuine plastic power, and setting himself to give it real national life, national body, and national form.

'I spare your Royal Highness a dissertation from myself on the dominant thoughts, wants, and wishes which are seething and clamouring within our people at the present time. The subject is too vast either for my time or the limits of a letter. But I cannot omit to put before you a personal conviction, forced upon me by an attentive observation of my German brethren for the last five years; to wit, that the thinking part of the people (nobility and bureaucracy apart) have come to be of the opinion that the special and chief impediment to a genuine and necessary development of German national life is the dynastic sentiment of our

Princes. However inconvenient the existence of this opinion may be, *there it is*, and *it grows*; and any one who wishes to help Germany must grapple with it, and strive to appease it. He, therefore, who is desirous of giving honest counsel to our people, must turn his attention to what is *immediately necessary* (for that is what is *most vital*), and endeavour, above all, to solve the problem—

'"In what way shall the relations of the German Princes to their people be modified, that as much unity shall be attained in the spirit and the power of the whole people, as is required for a well-organized national existence, and its natural development and gradual advancement."

'The right solution of this problem seems to me the Alpha of the statesman's alphabet of the day. Only after this has been solved will it be time to consider what remedial plans and experiments shall be tried. To dabble with these in the first instance I can only regard as a futile attempt to treat the great malady under which we suffer with soothing remedies, which only touch its surface.

'That the solution is very far from easy I am quite aware; still I cannot regard it as impossible. To me the main difficulty seems to lie in the fact that the modification in question must be an act of self-reform, if it is to be carried out safely with advantage to all parties. But that this self-reform must be put in practice by so many various races of princes, and in the teeth of the coercive force of the historical traditions and usages of three centuries, constitutes, to my mind, the chief difficulty; and in it, more particularly, those doubts are founded which I venture to entertain with reference to the talent of my honoured pupil as a reformer.

'None are so ignorant as our Princes of what is going on in Germany, and hence they are deficient in just insight into their own true interests. This ignorance makes them cling blindly to their class prejudices and hereditary relations, and

see in what is demanded from them in the real interests of the country only lawless desires on the part of the people, and mischief and danger to themselves. And yet I undertake to demonstrate to every Prince who, being of fair intelligence, is also alive to the duties incumbent upon him as a sovereign, that this desirable measure of self-reform might be carried into effect under conditions which must redound to the welfare of all, and consequently to the advantage of both governors and governed. I also venture to predict that the Princes will not gain the end they have in view by a mere obstinate refusal to listen to the wants of the age. The regeneration of Germany may be *retarded* by the will of individuals, but it cannot be *prevented*. If it is not brought about peacefully and spontaneously from above, through a process of self-reform, it will be effected amid general confusion from below upwards, through the pressure of urgent wants, and of the impulse given by these wants to public opinion. This latter contingency, however, implies a state of fermentation in the middle and lower classes. But this is what no true friend to his country or mankind can contemplate without alarm; for a general popular fermentation is in all cases a revolutionary process, of which this alone is certain, that for a time it must occasion nameless misery, while no one can tell whether it may not result in brutalizing the people rather than in civilising them.

'Of these views your Royal Highness will find a closer demonstration in the following additional observations.

'When I began, five-and-forty years ago, to devote myself to the acquisition of scientific knowledge, the study of German history had little or no interest for the majority of young men like myself. It had become the fashion to neglect, nay, to despise it as idle (*leer*); and any one who went deeply into the subject did so with some personal object, and was, in fact, the exception to the rule. The

deep significance of this sign of that time was noted by few, and the consequence was that antiquated notions about the general state and policy of the country were apt to be adopted as settled truths; although they had been divested by the altered circumstances of the age of any core of truth they might once have had, and so transformed into mere prejudice and delusion. Chief among such opinions were the axioms, that German culture was mainly due to the Fatherland being split up under separate rulers, and that the sovereign rights of the German territorial Princes were private property, transmissible, and to be dealt with like any other property. That such opinions should be formed in Germany, that for centuries they swayed the people as incontrovertible truths, nay, that they should have become the very foundation and corner-stones of our political life, is easily to be explained. The countless governments begot countless bureaucracies who absorbed within themselves all that in other countries constitutes that independent middle class, in which we uniformly find, by the nature of things, a higher intelligence and sounder information than in any other. That the German bureaucracies had no interest in rectifying the opinions in question, that, on the contrary, it was for their advantage to propagate and confirm them, and even to push them to an extremity, is self-evident.

'But out-and-out stagnation on this earth is only apparent; and therefore, even amongst us time could not fail to bring progress and change. When the French Revolution had annihilated the old state of things in France, it at the same time paved the way for the downfall of what was antiquated in the adjoining countries. The wars with France had made Germany its vassal, and reduced the number of German governments from 300 to 30. Napoleon's insane arrogance, and the shame and despair of those whom he had trodden under foot, ultimately brought about

a peace, and with it the spiritual and material transformation of Germany. Animated as they were by one conviction, the German populations had, by united strength and purpose, contributed to the accomplishment of a great historical act; and their consciousness of this fact had become the germ of a new national life. The people had come to know that hitherto they had had no Fatherland, and from that hour they cherished the resolve *to have one*. To this end their observation, their desire, their activity, were directed. At the same time, German ability and industry turned the peace to account in its own way, and created the primary elements of a middle class; and this is growing daily, and is continually opening out and onwards its own peculiar path.

'It is not merely men of culture and brains, but all who are animated by a warm feeling for the Fatherland, who now cultivate that field of German history which had so long lain waste. And what were they likely, what were they sure to find there? A ghastly popular decay, spiritual and material, which had been going on for more than two centuries; and this unmistakably due simply to the splitting up of the country under so many territorial governments. They read, in characters not to be mistaken, how out of this severance had grown the extreme weakness of the country as a whole, and with it a prevailing servility of spirit; while these, again, had engendered a slavish subjection to foreign rule: the whole resulting in well-deserved and ignominious wretchedness. They also read how the territorial sovereignty of our Princes, which had grown to be quite unlimited, had its origin, not in loyal adherence to, but in positive infractions of the original constitutions; and the conviction inevitably followed that the rights of sovereignty which are nowadays claimed and exercised by our rulers, when seen in the light of history and of law, have no higher sanction than use and wont following on what at first was arbitrary usurpation.

'Do not wonder, therefore, my dear Prince, if knowledge of this kind, wrested from experience and history, has wrought a mighty change in the views and opinions, the mind and feelings of our people, and produced a general distrust in, and dissatisfaction with, what is, or is likely to be, regarded in the Fatherland as a dynastic disposition or tendency. It is not to be denied that public opinion among the middle classes in Germany is now anti-dynastic, and it is the existence of this opinion which creates the wants, and suggests the warning, which I have made bold to express. For, in my opinion, no plans of regeneration, however well-meant, can lead to good, unless they be substantially in harmony with the spirit and tendency of the age. Without this your cleverest plans would not only be as chaff, but they would place yourself in a most undesirable personal conflict with public opinion, which might be fraught with mischief to you everywhere, and nowhere, perhaps, more than in England.'

The heart of the good Baron must have been touched by the spirit in which the reply to this letter showed that the observations personal to the Prince himself had been taken:—

'I have duly received your two letters of the 15th and 20th October, and I thank you for them with all my heart. As to the former and the views expressed in it on the subject of my German project, I quite understand that my announcement of a plan of regeneration has alarmed you, and I must acknowledge the weight of the reasons which you adduce as to my qualifications for calling such a plan into existence, only I think you have been misled by the expression "Regeneration Plan."

'The papers sent to the King consisted of a letter of mine to Bunsen, in which I sent my paper to him to look through as a German and a faithful servant of his Sovereign,—a

letter from Charles to me, depicting to me the extremely precarious state in which he finds Germany at the present juncture—a long Memorandum of Charles's, in which he looks at the position of affairs altogether from the popular as opposed to the dynastic point of view, predicts the downfall of dynasticism, and indicates the steps in advance which are desired by Liberal institutions in Germany, and the danger should Prussia not go frankly forward with its reforms. On these follows my Memorandum, in which I recognise the truth of what Charles says, but confine myself strictly to the practical question, "How is the Diet, which at present is a mere sham, to be raised into something true and efficient?" This suggests its being quickened into life by means of a Prussia emancipated from the deadening influence of Austria. My aim was, in the first place, to bring indirectly under the notice of the King of Prussia a plain unvarnished picture of the state of Germany by a German Prince, who has taken a personal part in German politics, and is in a position to understand them, and then, by suggesting a practical solution, to elicit propositions for dealing with the question in a practical way.

'In accordance with this view I sent your objections to Bunsen immediately I received them, and begged him to keep back his courier until I should have an opportunity of discussing the subject with you here; but it was too late; the courier had started that morning. I enclose copy of Bunsen's letter.

'Windsor Castle, 29th October, 1847.'

CHAPTER XXII.

If the state of affairs in the early part of 1847 was gloomy, still more gloomy was the aspect which they presented as the year advanced. So great had become the monetary confusion, owing to a concurrence of circumstances, each serious in themselves, but most disastrous in their combination, that the trade and enterprise of the country was for a time paralysed. Each day brought tidings of gigantic failures. In Lancashire alone, between July and October, these were stated by Lord Stanley to have amounted to close on 16,000,000*l.*[1] Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow, and the other great towns, had the same tale to tell. The wild speculation in railway shares of the preceding years had absorbed much of the capital which, in other circumstances, would have been available for the general industry of the country. Great bodies of shareholders had no alternative but to sell out; and yet to do so, except at a ruinous loss, had become impossible. The immense fall in the price of corn, consequent on the fine harvest, brought ruin upon many of the largest houses. Consols fell from 93 to 79$\frac{1}{2}$, and every species of property suffered a corresponding decline. Several considerable banks stopped payment. The pressure on all sides had become intolerable, and the panic reached a crisis when it was found that, on the 21st October, the reserve in the Bank of England had sunk to 1,600,025*l.*, a sum not equal to the amount of balances belonging to other

[1] Parliamentary Debate, 2nd December, 1847. *Hansard*, vol. xcv. 495.

banks, which were then held by it on deposit. Credit was suspended, and the whole trade of the country seemed upon the verge of being brought to a standstill.

In this emergency, yielding to the pressure brought upon them by the great London banking houses, the Government, on the 25th October, on the ground 'that the time had arrived when they ought to attempt, by some extraordinary and temporary measure, to restore confidence to the mercantile and manufacturing community,' authorised the Bank to issue notes beyond the limits prescribed by the Bank Charter Act of 1844. In enlarging their discounts, however, the Bank were to charge 8*l.* per cent. interest. The measure had the desired effect. Confidence was restored; gold began to pour in; merchants no longer found difficulty in getting their paper discounted. So completely successful was the step somewhat tardily taken by the Government, that the Bank of England had no occasion to act upon their recommendation; and, by the end of January 1848, the rate of interest had fallen from 8 to 4 per cent.

In some parts of Ireland crime had increased to an appalling extent. Bitterly were the Government now compelled to expiate their vote on the Coercion Bill, by which the Peel Ministry had been overthrown. Without the power which they had themselves helped to withhold, they found themselves unable to grapple with the outrages upon life and property, which had made the state of the country in many places worse, to use the language of Lord Stanley (*Speech on the Address*, 29th November), 'than that of civil war. One by one the best members of society fall victims of assassination; and it is now an admitted fact, that it is safer in that island to violate than to obey the law.' Adequate powers to cope with this state of things could no longer be delayed.

The new Parliament met on 23rd November; and on the

29th Sir George Grey, the Home Secretary, introduced a Coercion Bill, with a statement which left no doubt as to the necessity for some stern means of repression. Assassination ('assassination in the open day, encouraged by the entire impunity with which it was perpetrated'), incendiarism, robberies of arms, were the crimes to be struck at. In the month of October the total number of these had been 195. 139 had occurred in the counties of Clare, Limerick, and Tipperary; but King's County, Roscommon, and Fermanagh, shared in the opprobrium. It was impossible to resist the effect produced by the catalogue of crimes by which Sir George Grey enforced his argument. There were not, of course, wanting members to denounce coercion in every shape, and to remind the Ministry that, if they were right in the policy which they now urged upon the House, they owed some reparation to Sir Robert Peel. But again did that true statesman come to their rescue. For him the day of party conflict or party triumph had gone by; and he carried the warm sympathy of the House with him when he declared that 'now the best reparation that could be made to the last, was to assist the present Government in passing into a law the measure they had brought forward.' By the 10th of December the Bill passed through the House of Commons, supported by overwhelming majorities at every stage; and it was carried through the House of Lords without a division.

On the 20th of December Parliament was adjourned to the 3rd of February, 1848. In the meantime events had been moving rapidly on the Continent.

In Switzerland the dispute between the seven Catholic cantons of the Sonderbund and the other fifteen cantons had resulted in an appeal to arms. Fribourg had capitulated to the forces of the Diet under General Dufour, upon the 13th November. On the 22nd his army appeared before Lucerne,

the capital of the Sonderbund, and, after a gallant but futile resistance, the forces of the Sonderbund were dispersed, and the city surrendered at discretion. The remaining cantons of the Separatist League soon afterwards sent in their submission. By this time the Cabinets of England, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, had agreed to tender their joint offices as mediators to prevent the effusion of blood. But the movements of diplomatists, each jealous of the other, had been too tardy. Lucerne had been taken, and the contest was at an end on the 24th of November, two days before the adhesion of Lord Palmerston was given to the collective note of the Continental Powers. When, therefore, this note was presented to the Diet on the 4th December, one of the parties to the dispute had been crushed, and the offer of mediation was declined. The great end had, however, been gained of a settlement of the internal divisions of the cantons without the armed intervention of Austria, which would in all likelihood have precipitated a European war.

In Italy, Austria had by this time full occupation for the thoughts of her statesmen. The liberal movement there, commencing in local reforms, was rapidly assuming a character of menace to the very existence of Austria in Italy. The control of the movement was steadily passing out of the hands of the Pope, and the other princes of the country, who had followed his example in liberalising their institutions. The mission of Lord Minto, the great object of which had been to assist in securing 'the independence of each state within the proper limits, and the perfect liberty of each sovereign to undertake any reform he pleased,' had a much wider construction put upon it by the heated imaginations of a people new to liberty. Wherever he went he was regarded as an emissary sent by the British Government to proclaim its sympathy with the movement for a united and independent Italy. Every opportunity was taken to

foment this idea by the revolutionists of all countries, with whom the Italian peninsula was swarming; and, by inflaming at the same time the animosity against the Austrians to the uttermost, to force on an open conflict with that power.

In France the political atmosphere was charged with electricity. The murder of the Duchess of Praslin by her husband had given fresh point to the denunciations of vice in high places, which in periods of popular discontent are never wanting. Great suffering existed among the working classes, and socialist doctrines had become widely spread. Disaffection towards the Government pervaded nearly every class. In the law courts frequent revelations had been made of gross corruption in men high in office and in rank, of contracts procured by bribery, connivance at spoliation of the public stores, the shameless sale of honours. The public finances were in disorder; the annual deficit, with which the country had been too long familiar, was greater than ever. The Government majority at the recent elections was believed to have been secured by an expenditure unusually profligate. The Government, and not the nation, it was everywhere said, were represented in the Chambers;[2] and the whole forces, both of the Opposition and of the revolutionary party, were combined to raise throughout the country a cry for reform. Alienated from England, the Government had been casting about, without success, to secure alliances elsewhere. In Spain, in Portugal, their policy had been a failure; in Italy they were distrusted by the party of progress, at the same time that they were regarded with jealousy, not merely by Austria, but also by the Papal Government.

With so much on the political chart to bewilder and alarm, who might undertake to cast the horoscope of Europe? The Prince longed to have near him the experience and

[2] A significant placard appeared this summer on the walls in Paris. '*A nettoyer, deux Chambres et une Cour.*'

sagacity which had often stood him in such good stead; and on the 30th of September he wrote to Baron Stockmar, urging him again to take up his stay at the English Court. 'So far,' he says, 'are *you* personally concerned in what concerns us, that I will begin with myself, and tell you how much I long to have you here, and to go up with you into the political observatory, which at this moment offers to view the most important and noteworthy phenomena in the heaven of the political world—rightly to note and construe which, is of the greatest moment for me.'

In another letter to the Baron, about the same time, the Prince expresses the apprehensions as to the state of affairs in France which were general in men's minds towards the close of 1847:—

'In foreign politics the state of France is the most critical. The proceedings in the law Courts have laid bare a state of internal corruption that is frightful, and the effect of these revelations on the mass of the people will be immense. Communism is in the ascendant, and a Parliamentary reform will probably be carried through before long; if it be possible for the French to do anything without tumult and insurrection. . . . Happy he who at the close of his days can say to himself, that the divine laws of Morality and Reason were the guiding principles of his actions! However scanty the fruits they may have borne, those fruits cannot be other than good.'

At Osborne, where the Court resided during the short autumn Session of Parliament, the Prince found a pleasant distraction from the many topics of a disquieting kind, by which his thoughts were now so closely occupied. The work of laying out the grounds was resumed under his personal superintendence; and, with the artist's imaginative skill, he was making those changes in the terraces and slopes, and planting that rich variety of well-selected trees, which in future years were to present a picture of rare beauty to the

eye. The approach of Christmas brought back the Court to Windsor. In the mention of that to him always sacred time, the Prince's wonted cheerfulness breaks out in his letters. Welcome, indeed, was a season which brought so many tokens of affection from those whom he held in deepest regard,—so much gratefulness of heart for the happiness which surrounded him in his home. With his children strong and full of glee around him, his thoughts glance back to his own boyhood, which he sees reflected in their happy faces and their merry quips. Thus he writes to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg:—

'These pleasant festivities always bring me doubly into contact in spirit with your loved ones in the Home-land, where you were ever so dear to me. I must now seek in the children a reflex of what Ernest and I were in the old time, of what we felt and had experience of (*darbten*); and their delight in the Christmas-trees is not less than ours used to be. You really should, some day, take courage to trust yourself to the unstable element of the sea, were it only to have a peep at our little folks. When we are in the Isle of Wight, where we are not surrounded by a Court and its formalities, our life is so quiet and simple, that it would not fatigue you.

'Windsor Castle, 26th December, 1847.'

The state of affairs in Germany, which rendered Baron Stockmar's presence there of importance, as well as his feeble health, prevented him from complying with the Prince's wish that he should spend this winter in England. Frequent communications passed between them. Owing probably to their very confidential character, several of the Prince's letters appear to have been destroyed. Among them are those to which the two following letters by Baron Stockmar are in answer. These are, however, so admirable in them-

selves, and reflect so much light on the Prince's character, that the absence of the letters which gave occasion to them is the less to be regretted. The first, which is without date, appears to have been written about the middle of December:—

'Your Royal Highness's gracious despatch of the 15th inst. has just reached me. It seems to me composed in that kind of serious mood, into which we are naturally led by the contemplation and experience of the imperfection of men and things. And yet it is only by grappling with or undergoing actual experiences of a grave kind that the powers of the soul are developed and strengthened. For it is through them we learn the art of bearing what is, in the course of nature, inevitable, with calm submission: an art hard to learn, but, at the same time, the most useful of all human arts, because, Reason being its guiding principle, our life, as resulting from it, is consequently in accordance with Reason. Practise yourself, then, my beloved Prince, *sine irâ aut studio*, in the contemplation of human weaknesses, in the art of bearing them with humane gentleness, without allowing them to exert an injurious influence upon your own ways of thinking and acting.

'Very, very justly have you felt and said to me, that even although you were, contrary to your own judgment and conviction, to adopt the views of others for your practical guidance, such is the force of the laws by which absolute truth is directed, that you could not do so without mischief both to the special matter dealt with, and to your own nature. And so, in fact, it would be; a surrender of your own convictions to the dictation of others would do good to no one, but rather operate as a new element injurious to the business in hand, to others, and to yourself.

'I was interrupted, and in the interval I have become still more fully alive to the significance of the contents of the

letter which your Royal Highness has received from B. All that can be said as to a third person inevitably seeing things in a different light, has been said, as I have often remarked to you, in Lafontaine's *Mouche du Coche*.[3] It is not merely that *La Mouche*, or the vain self-conceited man, has, as he represents, done, and is alone able to 'do everything himself,' but, for this very reason, other people are incapable, and what they have done has been done wrong. Do not allow yourself to be shaken from your convictions, but remain constant to yourself, and then everything that depends on you will go well, or at least will be carried through with honour.'

In the following letter, written a few days later, Baron Stockmar recurs to the same subject:—

'Weary as I am in body, and indeed in mind, lame too in my hand, I have been so pleasantly excited by the receipt of your Royal Highness's letter, that I grapple resolutely with what is always an uphill task to me, that of writing. In the front rank let me put the urgent entreaty of an old and tried friend: "Do not be shaken from your convictions!" As God is my help, you are on the right path! Keep on it evermore, and advance upon it with no *misgiving* or *doubt*, but with *courage* and *assurance*, to *the end of your days*. *On this path* shall my prayer go with you, so long as I have power to pray; and I will pray in the spirit of your own noble words, that *He may lend you strength to abide truly and conscientiously in the service of truth and reason even unto death*.[4] And so truly as this world is guided by an eternal and moral law, *so truly will you hold your place with*

[3] See the fable of *Le Coche et la Mouche*, the 9th of the 7th book of Lafontaine's Fables, which has given rise to the proverbial expression used in the text.

[4] The allusion here is to the following passage in a letter from the Prince of 12th December, 1847, where, in reference to his having been misunderstood by a relation, he says: 'I must console myself by the consciousness which has always sustained you under similar circumstances, that from my heart I mean

honour in the sight of men, and in yourself uphold the highest, the noblest of all mortal possessions, the consciousness of having recognised betimes, and conscientiously fulfilled, your duty towards your Creator and His creatures.

'That between my good Prince and myself there is a great similarity in our modes both of thought and feeling seems to me to be shown by what you tell me of the impressions produced on you by what has taken place in B——, L——, W——, and Coburg. And *otherwise* it *cannot be!* He who resolves to act in accordance with reason and truth, however pure his intentions, may be sure he will be misunderstood and maligned. Nevertheless a man, conscious of the purity of his purpose, should lose neither confidence in his own worth, nor in what springs naturally from it. The stupidity and ingratitude of those to whom your Royal Highness has given proofs of a true and friendly disposition, cannot convert what that disposition has made you do into something opposite, and they will continue to operate as services of true friendship, long after the mists have been dispersed in which stupidity and ingratitude have endeavoured to obscure them. Hold fast, then, despite all bitter experiences, by the motto which I suggested to your Royal Highness not many years ago, "Great thoughts and a pure heart!"

'Of the state of things in England, which to me at a distance wear a very unpleasant aspect, I would fain learn more and in a more authentic shape, than is possible for me here. In ecclesiastical matters fanaticism and hypocrisy have reached a pitch which make reaction and conflict inevitable. I fear this conflict will be both obstinate and protracted. Its beginning seems to me close at hand, but

well to them all—that I have never done them aught but good, and take my stand on *truth* and *reason*, the worship of which becomes daily more and more a matter of conscience with me.

how and when it will terminate I will not venture to predict. People and Parliament will take part in the warfare which has hitherto been carried on between the hierarchy and religious parties. Probably in course of time the masses will be brought by agitation to bear upon this question, as through Cobden's influence they have done upon that of the Corn Laws. Then, and not till then, will Parliament take courage *out of fear*, that is, the timorous hypocrites will be afraid of continuing to uphold orthodox folly against the rights of Reason and Conscience.

'28th December, 1847.'

The concluding paragraph of this letter, the prophetic sagacity of which we are now in a position to appreciate, has reference to the warm theological discussions then raging, which had their origin in the nomination of Dr. Lee and Dr. Hampden to the respective sees of Manchester and Hereford. To both appointments vehement opposition was made. Exception was taken to Dr. Lee on the ground of alleged personal misconduct—a charge which rested on the slanderous assertion of a Birmingham surgeon, who was subsequently tried for the libel and convicted. Dr. Hampden, on the other hand, had made himself obnoxious to a section of the Clergy by the publication of opinions which they regarded as heretical. On his appointment, eleven years before, by Lord Melbourne, to the office of Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, his book had been censured by a formal vote of the majority of the Convocation of the University there. His nomination to the Bishopric of Hereford was the signal for a storm of theological controversy. An urgent protest against the appointment was forwarded to Lord John Russell by a large body of the Clergy, with the Bishops of London and Winchester at their head. It was met by an answer couched in terms of characteristic firmness:—

'I observe that your Lordships do not state any want of confidence on your part in the soundness of Dr. Hampden's doctrine. Your Lordships refer me to a decree of the University of Oxford passed eleven years ago, and founded upon lectures delivered fifteen years ago.' After alluding to the facts, that Dr. Hampden had since the date of that decree acted as the Regius Professor of Divinity—that his certificates had been accepted in the case of candidates for ordination by the University and by many Bishops—that his sermons had been spoken of with approbation by distinguished prelates, and that the Archbishop of Canterbury had intimated no disapproval of the proposed appointment, Lord John concludes:—'In these circumstances it appears to me that, should I withdraw my recommendation of Dr. Hampden, which has been sanctioned by the Queen, I should virtually assent to a doctrine, that a decree of the University of Oxford is a perpetual bar of exclusion against a clergyman of eminent and irreproachable life, and that, in fact, the supremacy which is now by law vested in the Crown is to be transferred to a majority of the members of one of the Universities, *nor should it be forgotten, that many of the most prominent of that majority have since joined the communion of the Church of Rome.*'

Undaunted by this reply, Dr. Merewether, the Dean of Hereford, wrote, on the 22nd of December, to Lord John Russell, that, if the appointment were persevered with, he should brave the consequences of a *præmunire*, which by law attached to his resistance, and vote in the Chapter against the election of Dr. Hampden to the Bishopric. 'I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 22nd inst.,' was Lord John Russell's significant reply, 'in which you intimate your intention of violating the law. I have the honour to be,' &c. The Dean persevered, but, being supported by only one other member of the Chapter, the election was completed, and he escaped the pains and penalties which he would otherwise have incurred. Further resistance was made by Dr. Hampden's opponents, and it only ceased after an unsuccessful appeal to the Court of Queen's Bench.

A passage in a letter of the Chevalier Bunsen's from Woburn Abbey, on the 31st of December, 1847, shows the warmth of the interest then prevalent in what was known as the Hampden Controversy:—

'Yesterday was a day of satisfaction for the house of Russell, the news having arrived of Dr. Hampden's election. Lord John had been much vexed in the latter days by the unreasonableness of the people he had to deal with—but yesterday at three o'clock, when we were collected in expectation and talking against time, in came Little Johnny (now Viscount Amberley) escorted by his aunt-like sister, and stationed himself at the entrance of the library, distinctly proclaiming, like a herald, "Dr. Hampden—a Bishop." We cheered him, and some one asked him, whether he liked Dr. H.—"I don't mind," was his answer, "for I don't know him!" His father came in afterwards, radiant with satisfaction. After dinner I suggested as a toast, "The Chapter of Hereford," adding *sotto voce* to Lord John, "and he who has managed them." Milnes and Strafford gave "The Dean" in opposition, and we were just divided, like the Chapter, two against fifteen.'—*Bunsen's Life*, ii. 155.

Returning to our extracts from the Prince's correspondence with Baron Stockmar,—on the 10th January, 1848, the Baron writes:—

'I have to thank your Royal Highness for two letters. All good wishes for the new year I renew with a true and glowing heart. Your Royal Highness writes, "the children have formed the most excellent resolutions, and, I may say, we no less." In joyful emotion, and with confidence that it will be heard, I add to them my "Amen!" There is great force in a man's firm will, and its true source is an *earnest* disposition.

'The day before yesterday I finished a book, the perusal of which has given me real satisfaction and strength, as I found in it most of my own views of life, which had long since been arrived at by myself (and by a wholly differ-

ent road), confirmed by a man of acknowledged powers of thought and judgment. It is called "Letters of W. von Humboldt to a Female Friend." He says, "Frivolity, however, undermines all morality, and suffers no deep thought, and no pure and deep feeling to germinate. It may, no doubt, be combined with an amiable and gentle disposition, but in such a soul so constituted *nothing can emanate from principle*, and self-conquest and self-sacrifice are out of the question." I should be greatly pleased if your Royal Highness would read this book soon; and, as a further recommendation, being written specially for ladies, it is admirably fitted for the Queen's reading.

'We have for some days had very boisterous weather, with cutting east-winds. For two months I have scarcely left my room, and I still suffer from sore throat, which makes me dread an attack of the very serious complaint which I have so often had in Coburg.

'10th January, 1848.'

The Prince to Baron Stockmar.

'My uncle is right in his regret that Radical tendencies and modern reforms bring all things to one level (*Alles nivelliren*), destroy much national and local individuality, mould everything upon one last (*alles über einen Leist schlagen*), and thereby prepare the way for French absorption, against which a national character is the strongest safeguard. But he forgets that epochs have a physiognomy, as well as countries and peoples, and that the transition from one epoch to another, though it may destroy what we formerly regarded as individual and essential, does not at the same time necessarily destroy nationality. It is so even with the matter of dress. The alteration of the Coburg peasant's dress (the men's, for example) will seem, as far as feelings go, to be a decline of individuality, but what gave that costume

individuality was only the fact, that it dates from the last century: then, however, it was *universal*, and simply a copy of the dress of the upper classes, and this dress of the upper classes is what the peasantry of the present day are bent on assuming *at once*.

'Combe has written another excellent pamphlet on Education, proceeding from the stand-point, "Does God govern the world? If He does, does He govern it according to fixed laws? If so, are these laws discernible by man? If they are, is it not the duty of man to abstract them, and make them the rule of his conduct? If so, is not this the real mission of science and education?" This, too, people say, is "infidel" to the last degree, because he reasserts that dogmas are of no use in forwarding, nay, that they actually stand in the way and retard the attainment of God's purpose, to let man grow up in harmony with His will and with Nature.

'The Hampden controversy is not yet at an end. One article upon it cites a passage from Dr. Johnson, which will delight you, if you do not already know it: "A dogmatist is not far from a bigot, and runs great danger to become a bloody persecutor." How very true!

'Windsor Castle, 31st January, 1848.'

Baron Stockmar to the Prince.

'Your Royal Highness, in your political argument, uses the phrase "Conservative" several times. Conservative, in a strict sense, is Nature and Nature only, *which maintains, uninterruptedly and in continuous action, a portion of the old, rejects a portion of what has grown too old, and in its stead creates and establishes a portion that is new.* If our statesmen would in their own department imitate this process of Nature as closely as possible, then I would not dispute their right to call themselves Conservative. These gentlemen must, however, at the same time not overlook the

fact, that to the art of preserving a productive faculty is essential, wanting which there can be but the semblance of preservation. As, however, the so-called Conservative policy of our day has either no productive faculty at all, or, if it has, practises and applies it either not at all, or only to the very smallest extent, I am inclined to feel very great distrust both of the phrase and its professors.

'The standing-point taken by Combe in his pamphlet seems to me the only right one. To subvert the power of dogma, as it now exists in England, and to adapt it to the wants and spirit of the age, will require great courage and perseverance, combined with great gifts. And yet England will have to take her share, along with the rest of Europe, in resolving this problem of the age.

'Be so kind as to furnish me with some authentic intelligence as to the present state of affairs in Sicily and Naples. One must own the way things have been going of late in the world threatens to make old Metternich's last days anxious and unpleasant. It is a lesson, that the happiest of men, for such Metternich has hitherto been in a singular degree, should hold himself ready to be put to the test of reverses, so long as the final limit of his days has not been reached.

'7th February, 1848.'

Well, indeed, might Baron Stockmar apply to Prince Metternich the adage, 'Call no man happy till his death!' The downfall had commenced of the fabric of Austrian domination, which his life had been devoted to uphold. Throughout the whole north of Italy the cry for independence had been raised; and now from the Government of Sicily and Naples—the most despotic in Europe—was to come an impulse that was destined to quicken the flame of liberal aspirations into a fiercer heat.

Scared by the spirit of innovation which pervaded the

northern part of the Italian peninsula, the King of the Two Sicilies had set his face against the loud demand for reforms, which the tidings of what had taken place in the north had awakened throughout his dominions. On the 12th of January, 1848, political disturbances broke out in Palermo. The Royal troops within the town made scarcely a show of resistance, and an expedition of 6,000 men was sent from Naples to reinforce the local garrison. Meanwhile, the island broke into open revolt, and the cry became general for 'The Constitution of 1812,' which had been given to the Sicilians by Lord William Bentinck, and for the immediate convocation of the Sicilian Parliament at Palermo.

When the tidings reached the King of the failure of his expedition, he despatched to the island certain decrees of a liberal character, one of them appointing Count d'Aquila, his brother, Lieutenant-General of Sicily, with a special Administrative Council. But these concessions came too late. The Constitution of 1812 and a Parliament in Palermo would alone satisfy his Sicilian subjects. By this time the King had become seriously alarmed, the more so that in Naples the popular feeling in favour of the insurgents had been unmistakably shown. His Ministry was dismissed, and a new Ministry appointed, composed of men well known for their liberal opinions. This was followed by a decree on the 28th of January, by which he promised to grant a Constitution to his subjects. On the 1st of February this Constitution was made public, and a general amnesty declared for political offenders.

Naples was in transports. But the Sicilians were not so easily appeased. The new Constitution by no means came up to the standard of that of 1812, and they determined to continue the struggle. The services of Lord Minto, as a mediator between their Sovereign and themselves, were subsequently called into play, but without effect.

The tidings of the concessions made by the King of Naples were received with enthusiasm by the central and northern States of Italy, and gave fresh force to the demands for liberal institutions. Fresh measures of administrative reform were adopted by the Pope; while Tuscany and Sardinia followed the example of the King of the Two Sicilies by forthwith granting new and very liberal Constitutions.

Such was the position of affairs in Italy when the Prince returned the following answers to Baron Stockmar's inquiry:—

'Political matters are in a strange state. The perverse obstinacy (*Halsstarrigkeit*) of the King of Naples has brought on a crisis which will drive all his colleagues in Italy to go much farther with their reforms than a short time ago would have been necessary, or may now perhaps be expedient. Ah, if other monarchs would take a lesson by this! But they think enough has been done, when they have ascribed insurrection to "English agency."

'Buckingham Palace, 13th February, 1848.'

'. . . Now to your question about Italy. Italy, like every other part of Europe, is *bent on progress* (*will vorwärts*), on being *politically active and national*. The Pope is the counterpart of the King of Prussia, great impulsiveness, half-digested political ideas, little acuteness of intellect, with a great deal of cultivated intelligence (*Geist*), and accessibility to outward influences. The rock on which both split is the belief that they can set their subjects in motion, and keep the direction and spread of the movement entirely in their own hands, nay, that they alone possess the *right* to control the movement, because it emanates from them. Lord Minto is charged with the task of confirming the Pope and the other Italian Princes in the resolution *themselves* to undertake the most necessary reforms, and not to be afraid

of their subjects, to preach to the people confidence in the government and the intentions of their rulers, and to assure both of the moral protection of England against *foreign* disturbance in the necessary but ticklish process of regeneration.

'This had been completely successful in getting over the awkward affair of Ferrara;[5] but the hostile demeanour of the King of Naples has led to an outbreak in Sicily, and afterwards in Naples, and now the stream has burst its bounds, and the torrent threatens to sweep away the other Italian governments. A new dam will have to be built much farther back to keep the masses in check, and, feeling this, people are already passing from liberal reforms direct to Constitutions, and I believe the leap is now *indispensable*, however detrimental it may be to an organic development.

'I may not conceal from you the fact that Paris at this moment is causing us *extreme* anxiety.[6] Louis Philippe and Guizot show great political boldness, but they have taken their stand entirely upon the old Bourbon *terrain*. The beginning of the change, and it may be the determining momentum, I still hold to have been (*bleibt wieder*) the Spanish marriage.

'Buckingham Palace, 16th February, 1848.'

[5] The occupation by Austrian troops, in August 1847, of the town of Ferrara. By the Treaty of Vienna Austria was authorised to maintain a garrison in Ferrara. This had always been construed as confined to the citadel. But when Austria, alarmed by the spread of liberal opinions within the Papal States, resolved to put pressure upon Pio Nono, it extended its military occupation to the town of Ferrara, and even threatened to place an Austrian guard at the entrance of the Legate's palace there. Besides protesting against this invasion of his territories, the Pope wrote to the King of Sardinia, as the only other independent Italian sovereign, to request that a Sardinian man-of-war should be sent to Civitâ Vecchia, as it was the purpose of His Holiness to take refuge in Sardinia, if his territory were invaded,—a request to which a favourable answer was forthwith returned.

[6] The question of the Reform Banquets had by this time passed into a most critical phase.

The apprehensions as to what might be impending in Paris, expressed at the close of this letter, were soon to be fulfilled. By the 26th of the month the Orleans dynasty had been overthrown, a Republic had been proclaimed, and King Louis Philippe, his Queen, and family, were hurrying by different routes to England; broken in fortunes, and haunted by the terrible sights and sounds of revolutionary fury. Simultaneously with these tidings, news had reached the Prince of the unexpected death of the Dowager Duchess of Gotha, to his affection for whom frequent reference has already been made. 'It is impossible to have known her,' says the Princess of Hohenlohe, in writing of her death to the Queen, 'and not to have loved and venerated her; but I also know what she was to dearest Albert, and how he will lament her loss.' So, too, his old friend at Coburg's first thought, when he hears of her death, is of what the Prince will suffer:—

'Yesterday,' he writes, 'I had the pleasure of receiving letters from your Royal Highness, and to-day the sad tidings have reached me of the death of dear good grandmama. I think I told you, soon after my last visit to Gotha, that I had found her much altered both in mind and body. Although I was therefore prepared not to see the excellent lady again, still I have been most painfully and deeply moved by the fulfilment of my fears. She was, as it was fit she should be, a Princess: true, honourable, and of a benevolence that came from the heart. Honour and love to her memory! Peace to her ashes! From my very heart I bewail your loss.

'Being more than usually upset by this melancholy piece of news, writing is peculiarly trying to me to-day. I will avail myself of the first hour I feel better to write to your Royal Highness about business. God take the Queen, your Royal Highness, and all your children into his keeping!

With the warmest wishes for the welfare of your Royal Highness, both spiritual and bodily, I am, with loving attachment and truth,

(Signed) 'STOCKMAR.'

'24th February, 1848.'

'Think,' says Her Majesty, in a letter on the 28th of February to the King of the Belgians, after speaking of the events in Paris, 'think, that in the midst of all this terrible anxiety, we received yesterday the news of the death of our dearly beloved grandmother! My poor Albert is quite beaten down with all this, and is so pale and sad it breaks my heart.'

The Prince's own words, in the following letter to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, complete the touching picture:—

'Alas! the news you sent were heavy news indeed. The dear, good grandmama! She was an angel upon earth; and to us ever so good and loving. That none of her grandchildren should have closed her eyes! Yet it was a boon to us that we were together [7] when the news came.

'What dismal times are those! I cannot give full way to my own grief, harassed as we both are with the terrible present. You also will be in deep distress. Augustus, Clémentine, Nemours, and the Duchess of Montpensier, have come to us one by one like people shipwrecked; Victoire, Alexander, the King, the Queen, are still tossing upon the waves, or have drifted to other shores: we know nothing of them. France is in flames; Belgium is menaced. We have a Ministerial, money and tax crisis: and Victoria is on the point of being confined. My heart is heavy.

'Buckingham Palace, 29th February, 1848.'

[7] The Prince's brother the Duke of Coburg and his Duchess were then on a visit to the Queen and Prince.

Two days before the Prince had sent a despairing request to Baron Stockmar to come over to aid him with his counsel and support, unaware that, in a letter then on its way to him, his friend had written: 'For the last six weeks I have been again more than usually unwell. My chief malady is an increasing derangement of the liver, which will assuredly soon put a period to my days. I lose flesh and strength daily.' If anything could have roused Baron Stockmar to make the journey, the following appeal would have had that effect:—

'The posture of affairs is bad. European war is at our doors, France is ablaze in every quarter, Louis Philippe is wandering about in disguise, so is the Queen; Nemours and Clémentine have found their way to Dover; of Augustus, Victoire, Alexander Wurtemberg, and the others, all we know is, that the Duchess of Montpensier is at Tréport under another name; Guizot is a prisoner, the Republic declared, the army ordered to the frontier, the incorporation of Belgium and the Rhenish provinces proclaimed. Here they refuse to pay the income tax, and attack the Ministry; Victoria will be confined in a few days; our poor, good grandmama is taken from this world. I am not cast down, still I have need of friends and of counsel in these heavy times. Come, as you love *me*, as you love *Victoria*, as you love *uncle Leopold*, as you love your German Fatherland.

'Buckingham Palace, 27th February, 1848.'

In a few days the Prince was able to assure his friend that his anxiety about the Queen was at an end:—

'Dear Stockmar,—I have good news for you to-day. Victoria was safely delivered this morning, and, though it be a daughter, still my joy and gratitude are very great, as I was often full of misgiving, because of the many moral

shocks which have crowded upon Victoria of late. V. and the baby are perfectly well.

'*I miss you more than ever.*

'Buckingham Palace, 18th March, 1848.'

The same day the Prince accompanies the announcement to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg of the addition of another Princess (now the Princess Louise) to his home circle with the words: 'Just now one is so completely surrounded by what is perplexing and painful, that this event brings quite a spot of light for us into the dark, gloomy time. Alas! my despatches home have now shrunk down to two—Ernest and yourself; yet, I thank God, that good grandmama has not lived to witness these stormy times, which would have torn her heart in twain.'

Cast down, indeed, by all that was going on around him, the Prince was not. The events at home and abroad, which were crowded into the first few months of this year, were of a kind to rouse the highest qualities of a nature so truly heroic. The time had come to put to the proof the results of the severe discipline under which he had trained himself since 1839. Not in vain had he made the forces, by which society, throughout Europe as well as at home, was agitated, the subject of his anxious study. When the storm broke, it found him prepared.

In rising to meet the difficulties of the hour, the Prince found the best support in the cheerful courage of the Queen. 'From the first,' as Her Majesty wrote to King Leopold on the 4th of April, 'I heard all that passed; and my only thoughts and talk were politics. But I never was calmer and quieter, or less nervous. Great events make me calm; it is only trifles that irritate my nerves.'

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

Memorandum as to the Influence of H.R.H. THE PRINCE CONSORT *upon Musical Taste in England.*

THE love of music and the arts may be said to have been hereditary in the Coburg family. The Duke Emil Leopold Augustus of Saxe-Gotha, the lifelong friend and patron of Carl Maria von Weber, was himself a poet and musical composer of very considerable accomplishment. Of this he gave proof by his 'Kyllenion, a Year in Arcadia,' with musical accompaniments by himself, and by his Art-Romance, 'Pandemone,' both of which were composed by him at Reinhardtsbrunn in 1804. The late King of the Belgians had also a great love and knowledge of music and sang well. He had been thoroughly trained in the best style of Italian singing, and used his fine baritone voice with a skill far beyond that of ordinary amateurs. Prince Albert's brother, the reigning Duke of Coburg, is known as a composer, and his opera of 'Casilda' has been performed with success in the principal theatres of Germany.

It has been already shown, that even while at Bonn Prince Albert was regarded by his fellow-students as a musician of no ordinary gifts and attainments. He took great interest in the study, and engaged actively in the proceedings of the Choral Union of Gotha. Thus we find him, on the 23rd of July, 1839, sending from Dresden to Concert Master Spaeth, as part of his contribution to their library, the full score and parts of Beethoven's famous *Preis der Tonkunst*, and begging to be informed of the progress of the Society's rehearsals of Händel and Nannini (*Early Years*, p. 210). In Florence, as we have seen, his organ-playing commanded admiration; and the letters of Lady Lyttelton, quoted

in the text, show that it was distinguished by the qualities which are only to be found in players with a genuine musical gift.

The Prince's taste had been modelled upon the works of the best masters; music, therefore, was to him not merely a delightful solace and recreation, but an art, in which the whole world of emotion and aspiration finds the most varied, and often the highest expression. He brought with him to England an extensive knowledge of the works of the greatest composers; and, small as the leisure was which he could command for the purpose, he was at pains to keep himself well informed of all that was being done either to enrich the already accumulated store of works of genius, or to raise the standard of general culture in the art. In furtherance of this object he lost no opportunity of bringing into public notice every new production which seemed likely to elevate or refine the public taste.

Previous to, and for some time after, his arrival in England, the Queen's Private Band was composed entirely of wind instruments. It is obvious that such a band could never satisfy a taste so broad and so highly educated as that of the Prince. Accordingly, he very soon had it reorganized as a string band; and as such its first performance took place in Windsor Castle on the 24th of December, 1840. What the Prince aimed at in the frequent Concerts by this band before the Members of the Court, and the Royal guests, may be at once divined from the fact, that in the Programmes are to be found the masterworks of Beethoven, Mozart, Haydn, Spohr, Weber, Lindpaintner, Marschner, Schubert, Auber, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, and others. Thus, for example, the great C Major Symphony of Schubert, which had not previously been publicly given in this country, Beethoven's 'Fidelio,' the finest Symphonies of Mozart and others, Wagner's 'Lohengrin,' and other now familiar works, were given in the Drawing Room at Windsor Castle; while on many occasions members of the band performed the Quartetts and Septett of Beethoven, and the Quartetts and Octett of Mendelssohn. The Prince made the selection of music for these performances the subject of his special care, and found in the performances themselves a never-failing source of delight. As every year brought a heavier strain upon his thoughts and energies, his pleasure in them appeared to increase. They seemed to take him into a dream-world, in which the anxieties of life were for the moment

forgotten. He would often stand apart in the Drawing Room, while some great work of Beethoven, Mozart, or Mendelssohn was being performed, rapt in reverie, but with a look in his face, which those could best understand, and most loved to see, who knew by it, that the pressure on a brain often too severely taxed was for the moment removed.

Of modern composers, Mendelssohn appears to have been his favourite. Mendelssohn was introduced to the Prince in June 1842; and in that month he played at Buckingham Palace, where his works, with which both the Queen and Prince were well acquainted, had already become familiar by their frequent recurrence in the performances of the Private Band. On that occasion Her Majesty's *Journal* records: 'He played several of his celebrated *Lieder*, and other pieces of his composition, and then asked the Queen and Prince to give him a *Thema* on which he would improvise, which he did most wonderfully and beautifully.'

In a letter from Frankfort to his mother (19th July, 1842), Mendelssohn gives a charming account of the incidents of this meeting:—

'I must tell you,' he writes, 'all the details of my last visit at Buckingham Palace. . . It is, as G. says, the one really pleasant and thoroughly comfortable English house, where one feels *à son aise*. Of course I do know a few others, but yet on the whole I agree with him. Joking apart, Prince Albert had asked me to go to him on Saturday at two o'clock, so that I might try his organ before I left England; I found him alone, and as we were talking away, the Queen came in, also alone, in a simple morning dress. She said she was obliged to leave for Claremont in an hour, and then suddenly interrupting herself, exclaimed, "But goodness, what a confusion!" for the wind had littered the whole room, and even the pedals of the organ (which, by the way, made a very pretty feature in the room) with leaves of music from a large portfolio that lay open. As she spoke she knelt down and began picking up the music; Prince Albert helped, and I too was not idle. Then Prince Albert proceeded to explain the stops to me, and she said that she would meanwhile put things straight.

'I begged that the Prince would first play me something, so that, as I said, I might boast about it in Germany; and he played a Chorale, by heart, with the pedals, so charmingly, and clearly, and correctly, that it would have done credit to any professional; and the Queen, having finished her work, came and sat by him and listened, and looked pleased. Then it was my turn, and I began my chorus from "St. Paul"—"How lovely are the messengers." Before I got to the end of the first verse they

both joined in the chorus, and all the time Prince Albert managed the stops for me so cleverly—first a flute, at the *forte* the great organ, at the D major part the whole register, then he made a lovely *diminuendo* with the stops, and so on to the end of the piece, and all by heart—that I was really quite enchanted. Then the young Prince of Gotha came in, and there was more chatting; and the Queen asked if I had written any new songs, and said she was very fond of singing my published ones. "You should sing one to him," said Prince Albert; and, after a little begging, she said she would try the "Fruhlingslied" in B flat—"If it is still here," she added, "for all my music is packed up for Claremont." Prince Albert went to look for it, but came back, saying it was already packed. "But one might perhaps unpack it," said I. "We must send for Lady ——," she said. (I did not catch the name.) So the bell was rung, and the servants were sent after it, but without success; and at last the Queen went herself, and while she was gone Prince Albert said to me, "She begs you will accept this present as a remembrance," and gave me a little case with a beautiful ring, on which is engraved "V.R. 1842."

'Then the Queen came back and said, "Lady —— is gone, and has taken all my things with her. It really is most annoying." (You can't think how that amused me.) I then begged that I might not be made to suffer for the accident, and hoped she would sing another song. After some consultation with her husband, he said, "She will sing you something of Gluck's." Meantime the Princess of Gotha had come in, and we five proceeded through various corridors and rooms to the Queen's sitting-room. The Duchess of Kent came in too, and while they were all talking I rummaged about amongst the music, and soon discovered my first set of songs. So, of course, I begged her rather to sing one of those than the Gluck, to which she very kindly consented; and which did she choose? —"Schöner und schöner schmuckt sich!" sang it quite charmingly, in strict time and tune, and with very good execution. Only in the line "Der Prosa Lasten und Muh," where it goes down to D, and then comes up again by semitones, she sang D sharp each time, and as I gave her the note the two first times, the last time she sang D, where it ought to have been D sharp. But with the exception of this little mistake it was really charming, and the last long G I have never heard better, or purer, or more natural from any amateur. Then I was obliged to confess that Fanny had written the song (which I found very hard, but pride must have a fall) and to beg her to sing one of my own also. If I would give her plenty of help she would gladly try, she said, and then she sang the Pilgerspruch "Lass dich nur," really quite faultlessly, and with charming feeling and expression. I thought to myself, one must not pay too many compliments on such an occasion, so I merely thanked her a great many times; upon which she said, "Oh, if only I had not been so frightened; generally, I have such long breath." Then I praised her heartily, and with the best conscience in the world; for just that part with the long C at the close she had done so well, taking it and the three notes next to it all in

the same breath, as one seldom hears it done, and therefore it amused me doubly that she herself should have begun about it.

'After this Prince Albert sang the Aerndte-lied, "Es ist ein Schnitter;" and then he said I must play him something before I went, and gave me as themes the Chorale which he had played on the organ and the song he had just sung. If everything had gone as usual, I ought to have improvised dreadfully badly, for it is almost always so with me when I want it to go well, and then I should have gone away vexed with the whole morning. But, just as if I were to keep nothing but the pleasantest, most charming recollection of it, I never improvised better; I was in the best mood for it, and played a long time, and enjoyed it myself so much that, besides the two themes, I brought in the songs that the Queen had sung, quite naturally; and it all went off so easily that I would gladly not have stopped; and they followed me with so much intelligence and attention that I felt more at my ease than I ever did in improvising to an audience. The Queen said several times she hoped I would soon come to England again and pay them a visit, and then I took leave; and down below I saw the beautiful carriages waiting, with their scarlet outriders, and in a quarter of an hour the flag was lowered, and the Court Circular announced, "Her Majesty left the Palace at twenty minutes past three."'

On the 7th of June, 1841, the Prince was present when Mendelssohn conducted the performance of his own 'St. Paul' by the Sacred Harmonic Society. He was again present,—and this time with the Queen,—when the same Oratorio was given by the Society, under Mendelssohn's superintendence, on the 2nd of June in the following year. When the 'Elijah' was performed in its completed form by the same Society on the 23rd of April, 1847, the Queen and Prince were present. The inscription, already well known among musical amateurs, which was written by the Prince, upon his copy of the words of the Oratorio, immediately after the performance, may find a place here:—

'To the Noble Artist, who, surrounded by the Baal-worship of debased art, has been able, by his genius and science, like another Elijah, faithfully to preserve the worship of true art, and once more to accustom our ear, amid the whirl of empty frivolous sounds, to the pure tones of sympathetic feeling and legitimate harmony; to the Great Master who brings home to us the unity of his conception through the whole maze of his creation from the soft whispering to the mighty raging of the elements: Inscribed in grateful remembrance by

'ALBERT.'

'Buckingham Palace,
'April 24, 1847.

We are informed by Sir Julius Benedict, that the Prince's warm appreciation of Mendelssohn's grand work 'gave an unmistakable stimulus to the highest branch of composition—"the Oratorio"—in this country.'

Before this time the Prince had testified his appreciation of this great master by arranging the Reading at Windsor Castle on the 1st of January, 1847, of 'Athalie,' accompanied by all Mendelssohn's choral and orchestral music. The reader upon this occasion was M. Brassour. This was the first time this fine work had been heard in England. The 'Antigone' was performed on the 10th of February, 1846, Mr. Charles Kemble reading the text, and again on the 1st of January, 1848, when Mr. Bartley was the reader. It was by this time well known in this country, through its performance at Covent Garden, as well as in Dublin and Edinburgh. But it was left for the Queen and Prince to introduce the 'Œdipus at Colonos' to England. A specially abridged version of this play was prepared for them by Mr. Bartholomew, the adapter of the 'Antigone,' and read by Mr. Bartley at Buckingham Palace on the 10th of February, 1848, and again on the 1st of January, 1852, with the accompaniment of Mendelssohn's choral and orchestral music. On the 1st of January, 1853, the same composer's 'Lobgesang,' with portions of his 'Christus' and 'Lörelay,' were given at Windsor Castle. Others of his works formed important features of the Concerts at the Palace. Thus his 'Walpurgis Night' was given on the 10th of February, 1854, his Cantata 'Praise Jehovah' on the 10th of February, 1857, and a selection from his 'Midsummer Night's Dream' on the 10th of February, 1859. A selection from his 'St. Paul' was given on the 28th of June, 1861, memorable as being the last of the Concerts arranged by the Prince. On all these occasions no pains were spared to ensure the music being given with thorough completeness,—vocal, choral, and instrumental.

Besides these great choral works, among the records of the Concerts at the Palace are to be found performances of such works as Bach's 'Passion's Musik' (The Matthæus), Beethoven's 'Praise of Music,' and portions of his Mass in C, Méhul's 'Joseph,' Haydn's 'Passion,' Weber's 'Praise Jehovah,' portions of Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul,' Romberg's 'Song of the Bell,' and Sir Sterndale Bennett's Cantata, 'The May Queen.'

The late Mr. Robert Bowley, who by what he had himself

done for choral music in England had earned the right to speak with authority on the subject, in writing (18th October, 1868) to Mr. W. G. Cusins, the Master of the Queen's Music (to whom we are indebted for many of the materials for this Memorandum), says:

'Looking through the list of Choral Concerts at the Palace, one cannot help being struck with the varied and excellent selections made from time to time by H.R.H. the Prince Consort. That these selections had a marked influence on the performances of Choral Music in England, I am thoroughly convinced; and it has always been a source of regret with me, that while in various notices of His Royal Highness much attention has been paid to his association with painting and sculpture and science generally, little or no notice has been taken of the interest he took, and the influence his example had, on the production in England of much that was of the highest class of musical art.

'If to what came under my notice at the Palace is added much more played by the Private Band, when no chorus was assembled, also various performances at The Antient Concerts, and the Philharmonic Society, and doubtless much heard in the quiet domestic circle, it will be seen that, apart from the knowledge and example of the Prince Consort as evinced by his own compositions,—which now ought to be more generally known,—he ought to be credited with effecting very great good to music:—in fact, I think, even more than by his judicious encouragement of the other Fine Arts. I am convinced, that the more this is looked into, the more it will be felt.'

To aid in the performance of Oratorios a new and larger organ was erected, under the Prince's instructions, in St. George's Hall, Windsor Castle, and another in the New Concert Room at Buckingham Palace.

The Prince also patronised the Leipzig Bach and Händel Societies for the publication of the works of those great masters in a complete and worthy form.

When State Performances were given at the Opera, the command was sure to include some work of the highest class, such as the 'Fidelio' of Beethoven, the 'Flauto Magico' of Mozart,—always a supreme favourite with the Prince—or 'Les Huguenots' or 'Le Prophète' of Meyerbeer.

The Prince's life, after he came to England, was too crowded to admit of his indulging freely his love of musical composition. The Muses are exacting mistresses, and will not send their best inspiration to a merely casual worshipper. But he produced

enough to entitle him to a very high rank among amateur composers. His compositions include a Choral Service, and an Anthem for the Church, many German Songs, some Chorales, which are now printed in all the new collections of Hymns, and a piece, entitled 'L' Invocazione all' Armonia,' which was performed with success at the Birmingham Festival of 1859, and has also been heard at the State Concerts in Buckingham Palace, and at the laying of the Foundation Stone of the Royal Albert Hall.

A complete list of the Prince's printed compositions is annexed. Many of his songs are full of charm—the charm of real feeling, and of graceful form,—and some—the *Klage der Liebe*, for example—while conspicuous for great delicacy and pathos in the melody, show no small originality as well as constructive skill in the treatment of the accompaniments. 'In these,' Her Majesty writes, 'the Queen constantly helped him in the final arrangement of the music. There was no occupation which gave her greater pleasure. But the cares of their large family, and still more the overwhelming amount of business, put a stop to this wholesome relaxation.'

List of the Printed Musical Works of H.R.H. The Prince Consort.

Lieder und Romanzen. *I. Heft.*

		Author of Words.
No. 1.	Abendruhe	*W. v. Schütz.*
2.	Gruss aus der Ferne	*Ernst Pr. v. S. K. G.*
3.	Morgengebet	*Eichendorff.*
4.	Ständchen	*Ernst Pr. v. S. K. G.*
5.	Trauerlied	*F. Rückert.*
6.	Schmerz der Liebe	*Ernst Pr. v. S. K. G.*
7.	Die letzten Worte eines Barden	*Ernst Pr. v. S. K. G.*

Lieder und Romanzen. *II. Heft.*

No. 1.	Ständchen	
2.	Lebensregel	*S. G. Bürde.*
3.	Mein Lebewohl	*A. E. Pr. v. S. C. G.*

LIEDER UND ROMANZEN. *III. Heft.*

No. 1. Gruss an den Bruder . . . . *Ernst Pr. v. S. C. G.*
2. Vereinigung . . . . . *M. Beer.*
3. An einen Boten . . . . . *(Altdeutsch).*
4. Sehnsucht nach dem Tode . . . *Burde.*
5. Klage der Liebe (Italian text) . *Albert Pr. v. S. C. G.*
6. Der Ungeliebte . . . . . *F. Ruckert.*
7. Der Bettler . . . . . *Schubert.*

LIEDER UND ROMANZEN. *IV. Heft.*

No. 1. Vergissmeinnicht . . . . . *G. von Kleist auf Leegen.*
2. Einsamkeit . . . . . *G. von Kleist auf Leegen.*
3. Der Zauber der Erinnerung . . *Ernst Pr. v. S. C. G.*
4. Dem Fernen
5. Der Orangenzweig . . . . *Ernst Pr. v. S. C. G.*

NOTE.—All the preceding pieces have been printed in Germany. Those which follow have been printed in England.

LIEDER UND ROMANZEN. *V. Heft.*

No. 1. Reiterlied (with Chorus) . . . *Ernst II. zu S. C. and G.*
2. Sonntags Klange . . . . . *Reineck.*
3. Aus Wilhelm Meister . . . *Gothe.*
4. Pretty Baby . . . . . *Viscount Fordwich.*
5. Choral . . . . . *(Stunden der Andacht).*
6. Nichts Schöneres . . . . . *Reineck.* (Lieder und Bilder).
7. Das kranke Mädchen . . . . *Reineck.* (Lieder und Bilder).

Te Deum . . . . . in C.
Jubilate . . . . . in A.
Sanctus . . . . . in C.
Responses to the Commandments . . in A minor.

Anthem—'Out of the Deep.' Ps. CXXX. vv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

L' Invocazione all' Armonia.
(Coro con Soli.)

Christmas Hymn—'Hark the herald angels sing.'

Chorale—'In life's gay morn.'
(This is the tune known as *Gotha.*)

So important in the Prince's view was music as an instrument of education, that he often expressed a wish that tuition in it should be made universal in public schools, and he spared no pains to let his opinions on this subject be known. Public opinion is now rapidly maturing in the same direction. The love of music is nowhere stronger than in England. Systematic education in its theory and practice is alone wanting to guide and elevate the taste, and to make its gratification a necessary part of our everyday life. Bad teaching and low standards have hitherto, in music, as in the other arts, caused a pitiable waste of the popular instinct for what appeals to all that is best and deepest in our emotional nature.

It is impossible better to indicate how much the Prince knew about music of the highest class, and how earnestly he strove to raise the level of public taste in England, than by reproducing the Programmes which he drew up for The Antient Concerts, over which he presided as Director, together with a list of the works selected by him for performance at the Concerts of the Philharmonic Society. These selections, while they show the refinement and purity of his taste, indicate a wide range of knowledge, which would have been remarkable even in the case of an amateur with unlimited time at his command for the cultivation of musical study.

List of Music selected by H.R.H. THE PRINCE CONSORT *for performance at* THE ANTIENT CONCERTS, *at which he presided as Director.*

NOTE.—Every work in the following List, except in the case of the Concert of April 29th, 1840, was performed at The Antient Concerts for the *first time* on the dates given.

APRIL 29TH, 1840.

National Anthem—'God Save the Queen'
Selection from the 'Creation' . . . . . *Haydn.*
Duetto—'Quando corpus' (Stabat Mater) . . . *Pergolesi.*

Recitative—'Such, Jephthah, was'
Recitative—'Sound then the last alarm' (Jephthah) *Händel.*
Chorus—'When his loud voice'
Duetto—'Cara sposa' (La Creazione del Mondo) . *Haydn.*
Aria—'O Cara immagine' (Die Zauberflöte) . . *Mozart.*
Aria—'Si tra i ceppi' (Berenice) . . . . . *Händel.*
Quintetto (Double Choir)—'Sanctus Dominus'
Chorus—'Osanna in excelsis' . *Palestrina* (1565).
Recitative—'Sposa! Euridice'
Aria—'Che farò senza' (Orfeo) . . *Gluck.*
Recitative—'But bright Cecilia'
Solo and *Chorus*—'As from the' (Dryden's Ode) . *Händel.*
Chorus—'The dead shall live'
Overture—'Anacreon' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Opening of 'Grand Te Deum' . . . . . *Graun.*
Recitative—'Ye twice ten hundred'
Air—'By the croaking' (Indian Queen) *Purcell.*
Mottetto—'O God, when thou appearest' . . *Mozart.*
Song—'Water parted from the sea' (Artaxerxes) . *Dr. Arne.*
Song—'Let the bright seraphim' (Samson) . . *Händel.*
Selection from 'The Mount of Olives' . . . *Beethoven.*
Glee—'Here, in cool grot' . . . . *The Earl of Mornington.*
Chorus—'O sing praises' (Fugue) . . . . *Sebastian Bach.*
Quartetto and *Chorus*—'Nella tua man'
Chorus—'L'uom' Dio mori' . . *Haydn.*

MAY 17TH, 1843.

Overture—'Armida' . . . . . *Gluck.*
Terzetto—'Perfida Clori' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Selection from Mass in E♭ . . . . . *Hummel.*
'Te Deum' . . . . . *Haydn.*
Air from 'Armida' . . . . . *Gluck.*
Gregorian Hymn (A.D. 570)
Corale (A.D. 1586) . . . . . *Lucas Osiander.*
Chorus—'Gli Orazzi ed i Curiazzi' . . . . *Cimarosa.*
Recitative and *Air*—'Iphigenia in Tauride' . . *Gluck.*
(Sung by Signor MARIO.)
Hymn from 'Joseph' . . . . . *Méhul.*
Air from 'Der Tod Jesu' . . . . . *Graun.*
Gloria from Mass in C . . . . . *Cherubini.*
March and *Chorus*—'Die Zauberflöte' . . . *Mozart.*

MAY 31ST, 1843.

Kyrie from Mass in C . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Gregorian Hymn (A.D. 570)
Quintett from 'Joseph' . . . . . *Méhul.*
Selection from 'Die Zauberflöte' . . . . *Mozart.*
Selection from E♭ Mass . . . . . *Hummel.*
Miserere (A.D. 1660) . . . . . *Tommaso Bai.*
Selection from Mass in D . . . . . *Haydn.*
Overture—'Coriolanus' . . . . . *Beethoven.*
Quintett and *Chorus*—'Salvator Mundi' (1569) . *Palestrina.*
Terzetto—'Faniska' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Selection—'Armida' . . . . . *Gluck.*
Selection from Cantata—'The Praise of Music' . . *Beethoven.*

MAY 8TH, 1844.

Mottetto—'Si iniquitates' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
(Original MS. lent by H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT.)
Aria from an Oratorium . . . . . *Mozart* (1766).
(Sung by Signor MARIO. Original MS. lent by H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT.)
Chorale (1544) harmonized by . . . . . *J. S. Bach.*
Duett—'Stabat Mater' . . . . . *Haydn.*
Quartetto e Solo—'La Passione' . . . . . *Graun.*
Aria—'Eja ergo' . . . . . *Pergolesi.*
Aria—'Fra caligni profonde' (*Orlando*) . . *Handel.*
(Sung by Signor LABLACHE.)
Selection from 'Iphigenia in Tauride' . . . *Gluck.*
Quartett—'Das unterbrochene Opferfest' . . *Winter.*

MAY 20TH, 1844.

Mottetto . . . . . *Himmel.*
Aria—'Quis non posset' (Stabat Mater) . . *Haydn.*
Hymn—'Alla Trinità' (1545) . . . . . *Arcadelt.*
Selection from Mass in B flat . . . . . *Mozart.*
Air—'Das unterbrochene Opferfest' . . . . *Winter.*
Overture—'Das unterbrochene Opferfest' . . *Winter.*
Aria—'Les deux Journées' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
(Sung by Signor LABLACHE.)
Chorus and *Soli*—'Ifigenia in Aulide' . . . *Gluck.*
Quartetto—'Gerusalemme Liberata' . . . . *Righini.*
Second *Finale*—'Don Giovanni' . . . . . *Mozart.*
(With the Composer's original ending.)

APRIL 16TH, 1845.

Overture—'Gabrielle d'Estrées' . . . . . *Mehul*
Recitative and *Air*—'Faniska' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Concerto for many ancient instruments (A.D. 1600) *Emilio del Cavaliere.*
(Lent by M. Fétis, of Brussels.)
Quartetto—'La Villanella rapita' . . . . . *Mozart.*
Selection from 'Orphée Assiégé' . . . . . *Gluck*
Overture—'La Villanella rapita' . . . . . *Mozart*
Scena—'Orontea' (1649) . . . . . *Cesti.*
Chorus—'God is our Refuge' (1764) . . . . *Mozart.*
(Mozart was nine years old when the was composed, and in England.)
Spanish Villanico, six voice parts (1530) . . . *Soto di Puebla.*
(Accompanied by six guitars.)
Arietta—'Se nel ben' (1680) . . . . . *Stradella.*
Chorus—'King Stephen' . . . . . *Beethoven.*

MAY 28TH, 1845.

Selection from an *Oratorio*—'Das Weltgericht' . . *F. Schneider.*
(Sung by HERR STAUDIGL.)
Preghiera—'Eterno Iddio!' (Faniska) . . . . *Cherubini*
Quartetto—'Or, muoja' (Fidelio) . . . . . *Beethoven.*
Chorus—'Gloria in Excelsis' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Overture and *Introduction*—'Don Giovanni' . . . *Mozart.*
Sestetto—'Le Nozze di Figaro' . . . . . *Mozart.*
Scene—'Iphigenia in Aulis' . . . . . *Gluck.*
(Sung by HERR PISCHEK.)
Aria—'La serva Padrona' . . . . . *Pasiello.*
Duetto and *Chorus*—'Faniska' . . . . . *Cherubini.*
(Sung by HERRN PISCHEK and STAUDIGL.)

APRIL 29TH, 1846.

Chorus and *Solos*—'Domine, Jesu Christe,' from Requiem in C minor . . . . . *Cherubini.*
Anthem—'O Lord, the Maker of all Things' . *King Henry VIII.*
Offertorium—'Christus natus est nobis' . . . *Abbé Vogler.*
Chorale . . . . . *Benno, bishop of Meissen*, A.D. 1107.
Chanson de Roland—'Soldats François'
(Sung by Signor MARIO.)
Overture—'King Stephen' . . . . . *Beethoven.*

Duo—'Richard Cœur de Lion' . . . . . *Grétry.*
Romance Provençale . . . . . *Thibaut, king of Navarre.*
(Sung by Signor MARIO.)
Ductto from 'La Cosa rara' . . . . . *V. Martini.*
Chorus and *Solos*—'Al Buscià' (Il Seraglio) . . *Mozart.*
Terzetto—'Il Direttore della Commedia' . . . *Mozart.*

MAY 5TH, 1847.

Gregorian Hymn (A.D. 500)
Motletto—'Io canterò le lodi' . . . . . *Marcello.*
Prelude and *Fugue* on the name of Bach . . *Bach.*
(Organ—DR. F. MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.)
Finale to the first Act—'Il Flauto Magico' . . *Mozart.*
Overture—Fugato . . . . . *Mozart.*
Romance—'Le Devin du Village' . . . . *J. J. Rousseau.*
The *Easter Hymn*—ascribed to Henry Carey
Ductto—'Das unterbrochene Opferfest' . . . *Winter.*
Air—'Le Déserteur' . . . . . *Monsigny.*
Ductto—'La Capricciosa corretta' . . . . *Guglielmi.*
Romance and *Chorus* . . . . . *Martini.*

MAY 10TH, 1848.

'The Mount of Olives' (complete) . . . . *Beethoven.*
Coro—'Agrippina' . . . . . *Händel.*
Sestetto—'La Cosa rara' . . . . . *Martini.*
Ductto—'Il Seraglio' . . . . . *Mozart.*
Romanza—'Anacreon' . . . . . *Grétry.*
Terzetto—'Nina' . . . . . *Paisiello.*
Finale to the first Act—'Le Nozze di Figaro' . . *Mozart.*

List of Music selected by H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT *for performance at the* CONCERTS *of the* PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

EXTRA CONCERT, JULY 10TH, 1843.

Scherzo and second part of Beethoven's Choral Symphony.
Overture—'The Isles of Fingal' . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
Overture—'Der Freischutz' . . . . . *Weber.*
Conductor . . . DR. SPOHR.

JUNE 10TH, 1844.

'Midsummer Night's Dream' Music.
Overture—'Fierabras'—*Schubert.* (First performance in England.)
Beethoven's C Minor Symphony.
Conductor . . . DR. MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

APRIL 14TH, 1845.

'Walpurgis-Nacht'—*Mendelssohn.* A Major Symphony—*Beethoven.*
Overture—'Euryanthe' . . *Weber.*
Conductor . . . SIR HENRY BISHOP.

MARCH 30TH, 1846.

Pastoral Symphony—*Beethoven.*
Overture—'Melusina' . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
Conductor . . . MR. COSTA.

JUNE 26TH, 1848.

Italian Symphony . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
C Minor Symphony, and Overture 'Leonora . . . *Beethoven.*
Conductor . . . MR. COSTA.

MARCH 26TH, 1849.

Athalie' (first public performance in England) . *Mendelssohn.*
Symphony in B flat . *Beethoven.*
Conductor . . . . . Mr. COSTA.

APRIL 28TH, 1851.

Overture—'Struensee'—*Meyerbeer.* Symphony No. 5—*Beethoven.*
Symphony in A . *Mendelssohn.*
Conductor . . . . . Mr. COSTA.

MARCH 29TH, 1852.

Pastoral Symphony . . . *Beethoven.*
Overture—'Meeresstille' . . . . . *Mendelssohn.*
(Generally fine programme.)
Conductor . . . Mr. COSTA.

EXTRA CONCERT, JULY 4TH, 1853.

'Midsummer Night's Dream' Music—*Mendelssohn.*
Overture—'Egmont' and Symphony in A . . . *Beethoven.*
Conductor . . . Mr. COSTA.

JUNE 5TH, 1854.

First performance in England of Schumann's B flat Symphony.
Overture—'Leonora'—*Beethoven.*
Conductor . . . Mr. COSTA.

JUNE 11TH, 1855.

Symphony—'Jupiter'—*Mozart.* *Overture*—'Tannhäuser'—*Wagner*
Symphony in F—*Beethoven.*
Conductor . . Herr RICHARD WAGNER.

JUNE 23RD, 1856.

First performance of Schumann's Cantata, 'Paradise and the Peri.'
(Madame Lind-Goldschmidt sang the principal part.)

Conductor . Prof. STERNDALE BENNETT.

JUNE 21ST, 1858.

Overture—'Leonora' and Symphony in B flat—*Beethoven.*
Overture—'Tannhauser'—*Wagner.*
Joachim played two Concertos—*Spohr* and *Mendelssohn.*

Conductor . Prof. STERNDALE BENNETT.

JUNE 4TH, 1860.

Overture—'Ruy Blas,' and Italian Symphony . . . *Mendelssohn.*
Symphony—'Eroica' . . *Beethoven.*

Conductor . . Prof. STERNDALE BENNETT.

APPENDIX B.

I.

A sa Majesté la Reine de Grande Bretagne.

Neuilly, 8 Septembre, 1846.

Madame,—Confiante dans cette précieuse amitié dont votre Majesté nous a donné tant de preuves, et dans l'aimable intérêt que vous avez toujours témoigné à tous nos enfants, je m'empresse de vous annoncer la conclusion du mariage de notre fils Montpensier avec l'Infante Louise Fernanda. Cet événement de famille nous comble de joie, parceque nous espérons qu'il assurera le bonheur de notre fils chéri, et que nous retrouverons dans l'Infante une fille de plus, aussi bonne, aussi aimable que ses aînées, et qui ajoutera à notre bonheur intérieur, le seul vrai dans ce monde, et que vous, Madame, savez si bien apprécier. Je vous demande d'avance votre amitié pour notre nouvelle enfant, sûre qu'elle partagera tous les sentiments de dévouement et d'affection de nous tous pour vous, pour le Prince Albert, et pour toute votre chère famille.

. . . Le Roi me charge de vous offrir ses tendres et respectueux hommages, ainsi que ses amitiés au Prince Albert; il espère que vous aurez reçu ses lettres et que les pêches soient arrivées à bon port. Tous mes enfants me chargent aussi de vous offrir leurs hommages. Veuillez offrir mes amitiés au Prince Albert. Embrassez pour moi vos si chers enfants, et réccevez l'expression de la tendre et inaltérable amitié avec laquelle

Je suis,

Madame,

De votre Majesté la toute dévouée Sœur et Amie,

Marie Amélie.

II.

À sa Majesté la Reine des Français.

Osborne, 10 Septembre, 1846.

Madame,—Je viens de recevoir la lettre de votre Majesté du 8me de ce mois, et je m'empresse de vous en remercier. Vous vous souviendrez peut-être de ce qui s'est passé à Eu entre le Roi et moi; vous connaissez l'importance que j'ai toujours attachée au maintien de notre entente cordiale et le zèle avec lequel j'y ai travaillé; vous avez appris sans doute que nous nous sommes refusés d'arranger le mariage entre la Reine d'Espagne et notre cousin Léopold (que les deux Reines avaient désiré vivement), dans le seul but de ne pas nous éloigner d'une marche qui serait plus agréable au Roi, quoique nous ne pouvions considérer cette marche comme la meilleure. Vous pourrez donc aisément comprendre que l'annonce soudaine de ce *double mariage* ne peut nous causer que de la surprise et un bien vif regret.

Je vous demande pardon, Madame, de vous parler de politique dans ce moment, mais j'aime pouvoir me dire que j'ai toujours été *sincère* avec vous.

En vous priant de présenter mes hommages au Roi,

Je suis,

Madame,

De votre Majesté la toute dévouée Sœur et Amie,

VICTORIA R.

III.

À sa Majesté la Reine des Belges.

Neuilly, 11 Septembre, 1846.

Ma chère bonne Louise,—La Reine vient de recevoir une lettre, ou plutôt une réponse de la Reine Victoria, à celle que tu sais qu'elle lui avait écrite, et cette réponse me fait une vive peine. Je suis porté à croire que notre bonne petite Reine a eu presque autant de chagrin à écrire cette lettre que moi à la lire. Mais enfin, elle ne voit maintenant les choses que par la lunette

de Lord Palmerston, et cette lunette les fausse et les dénature trop souvent. C'est tout simple. La grande différence entre la lunette de cet excellent Aberdeen et celle de Lord Palmerston provient de la différence de leur nature. Lord Aberdeen aimait à être bien avec ses amis ; Lord Palmerston, je le crains, aime à se quereller avec eux. C'est là, ma chère Louise, ce qui causait mes alarmes sur le maintien de notre entente cordiale, lorsque Lord Palmerston a repris la direction du *Foreign Office*. Notre bonne Reine Victoria repoussait ces alarmes, et m'assurait qu'il n'y aurait de changé que les hommes. Mais ma vieille expérience me faisait craindre que, par l'influence du caractère de Lord Palmerston, plutôt peut-être que de ses intentions, les allures politiques de l'Angleterre ne subissent une modification, graduelle ou brusque, et malheureusement les affaires d'Espagne viennent d'en être l'occasion.

Dans le premier moment qui a suivi la lecture de la lettre de la Reine Victoria, j'étais tenté de lui écrire directement, et j'ai même commencé une lettre pour faire appel à son cœur et à ses souvenirs, et lui demander d'être jugé par elle plus équitablement, et surtout plus affectueusement ; mais la crainte de l'embarrasser m'a arrêté, et j'aime mieux t'écrire à toi, à qui je puis tout dire, pour te donner toutes les explications, nécessaires *to replace the things in their true light*, et pour nous préserver de ces odieux soupçons, dont je puis dire, *en toute sincérité*, que ce n'est pas à nous qu'on pourrait les adresser.

Je reprendrai donc avec toi les choses au commencement, et je remonterai à l'origine des mariages Espagnols.

Tu sais, ma chère amie, que pendant sa Régence, et longtemps avant son expulsion, la Reine Christine nous demandait sans cesse de conclure les mariages de nos deux fils cadets, les Ducs d'Aumale et de Montpensier, avec ses deux filles, la Reine Isabelle II. et l'Infante Louise Ferdinande. Nous lui avons constamment répondu que, quant à la Reine, quelque flattés que nous fussions d'une pareille alliance, il n'y avait pas à y penser, et que nous avions sur cela un parti bien arrêté ; mais que, quant à l'Infante, nous nous en occuperions quand elle serait *nubile*, ou, comme on dit en Angleterre, *marriageable*, et que, pourvu qu'il y eût bonne chance qu'elle ne devînt pas Reine, et qu'elle restât Infante, c'était une alliance qui nous conviendrait beaucoup, et que nous la ferions contracter avec plaisir au Duc de Montpensier.

A mesure que les succès militaires de tous mes fils donnaient une nouvelle impulsion à cette opinion favorable qui se développait de toutes parts sur leur compte, et que le glorieux combat *d'Aïn Taguin*, où le Duc d'Aumale commandait, et où il parvint à s'emparer de tout le camp (autrement dit *la Smala*) d'Abd-el-Kader, entourait son nom de ce prestige qui entraîne toujours les hommes de tous les pays, il s'élevait en Espagne un cri que je pourrais dire presque universel, pour exprimer le vœu que le Duc d'Aumale devînt l'époux de la Reine Isabelle II. Mais je continuai à être aussi sourd à ce vœu que je l'avais été à ceux qui m'avaient été adressés successivement pour placer le Duc de Nemours sur les trônes de Belgique et de Grèce, et pour lui faire épouser la Reine de Portugal. Mes refus furent nets et positifs. Je n'ai jamais trompé personne. Je l'ai dit aux Portugais comme aux Belges. Je n'ai laissé aucune illusion ni à ceux qui craignaient, ni à ceux qui désiraient, et après que ma loyauté, dans les intentions que je proclamais de ne pas accepter la main de la Reine d'Espagne pour le Duc d'Aumale, avait été prouvée avec tant d'éclat par son mariage avec une princesse de Naples, il est inconcevable que Lord Palmerston parle aujourd'hui au Comte de Jarnac, mon chargé d'affaires à Londres, dans un billet écrit de sa main, *de cette ambition cachée*, qu'il juge à propos de considérer comme le mobile de ma conduite relativement au mariage du Duc de Montpensier avec l'Infante Louise Ferdinande.

Avant même que la Reine Christine vînt à Paris, et depuis, dans les nombreuses conversations que j'ai eues avec elle pendant son séjour auprès de nous, j'avais toujours répondu à son insistance pour que l'époux de la Reine, sa fille, fût un de mes fils, en lui manifestant l'opinion dans laquelle je n'ai jamais varié, et qui est aujourd'hui confirmée par l'assentiment à peu près unanime de l'Espagne, que l'époux de la Reine devait, au contraire, être choisi parmi les princes descendants de Philippe V. *dans la ligne masculine*, clause qui excluait tous mes fils, puisqu'ils ne descendent de Philippe V. et de Charles III. que dans *la ligne féminine* par la Reine mon épouse chérie et bien-aimée, mais qui comprenait, en princes alors mariables, trois fils de Don Carlos, deux fils de Don François de Paule, deux Princes de Naples et un Prince de Lucques. Mon gouvernement, partageant entièrement cette opinion, avait même chargé un de nos agents

diplomatiques (M. Pageot) de la développer aux trois cours de Londres, de Vienne, et de Berlin. Cette mission fut sans resultat: cependant Lord Aberdeen en fut tellement frappé, qu'en considérant les difficultés des uns et des autres, son premier mouvement fut de dire que le Comte d'Aquila, frère du Roi de Naples et de la Reine Christine, serait le choix qui en présenterait le moins. Ce Prince ayant bientôt après épousé la Princesse du Brésil, Doña Januaria, la préférence de la Reine Christine *entre ces Princes* passa à son frère le Comte de Trapani, et c'est cela (et non aucune préférence personelle de ma part) qui a amené ce qu'on a appelé sa candidature, et dont on a fait depuis un si malheureux usage.

On ne s'occupait nullement alors du mariage de l'Infante, qui n'avait que dix ans, et on ne pensait, d'un côté, qu'à m'arracher le mariage du Duc d'Aumale, et de l'autre, qu'à l'empêcher. Ce fut au milieu de cette lutte qu'on mit en avant, n'importe par qui, n'importe comment, l'idée de donner pour époux à la Reine d'Espagne le Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg, neveu du Roi des Belges, cousin germain de la Reine Victoria et du Prince Albert, frère du Roi de Portugal, de la Duchesse de Nemours et du Prince Auguste, mon gendre.

Cette candidature fut un incident bien fâcheux. Elle a faussé toutes les positions, la mienne surtout, par l'opposition que j'ai cru de mon devoir d'y apporter; et je vois encore, par les termes mêmes de la lettre de la Reine Victoria, à quel point on se trompe et on est injuste de son côté, dans l'appréciation qu'on fait des motifs qui ont dicté cette opposition. Ces motifs étaient puisés autant dans la sincère amitié que je porte aux Princes de Cobourg (et dont je crois leur avoir donné plus d'une preuve dans la part que j'ai prise à faciliter les nouvelles illustrations de leur maison) que dans les mêmes considérations politiques qui me portaient à écarter mes propres enfants de cette candidature. J'étais convaincu, et je le suis plus que jamais, que le succès de la candidature du Prince Léopold n'aurait servi qu'à attirer des malheurs sur la tête de ce jeune Prince et aussi sur celle de la Reine elle-même (si elle l'avait épousé) en amenant le renversement de leur trône et en plongeant l'Espagne dans cette anarchie dont il est toujours difficile de la préserver. Tu sais, ma bonne Louise, à quel point j'ai développé cette opinion tant dans mes conversations avec ton excellent Roi que dans les lettres que je

lui ai écrites, et tu dois te rappeler tous les arguments dont je me suis servi pour la motiver. Je ne les répéterai donc pas dans cette lettre déjà si longue ; mais je te rappelerai combien j'ai constamment regretté que l'exemple que j'ai donné en prononçant moi-même l'exclusion de mes fils n'ait pas été suivi, et que cette candidature, dont le succès me paraissait devoir être un malheur pour tous, n'ait pas été formellement repoussée et écartée dès l'abord par ceux qui avaient autorité pour le faire, ce qui aurait probablement évité aux uns un grand et inutile désappointement, à moi un des plus pénibles chagrins que j'aie éprouvés (et Dieu sait que je n'en ai pas manqué dans le cours de ma longue vie !) et à tous nos pays et au monde entier le danger des malheurs qui les accableraient nécessairement, si la tourmente actuelle ne se terminait pas, comme j'en ai pourtant la ferme confiance, par le maintien et la consolidation de cette précieuse entente cordiale, qui peut seule les en préserver.

Je te parlerai à présent du mariage de Montpensier avec l'Infante. Il n'en a pas été dit un seul mot, ni quand la Reine Victoria est venue à Eu en 1843, ni quand j'ai été à Windsor, en 1844 ; ce n'est qu'en 1845 que Lord Aberdeen en parla à Guizot et à moi pour la première fois. Notre réponse fut la même. Je dis à Lord Aberdeen que je désirais vivement que Montpensier épousât l'Infante Louise Ferdinande ; mais que je ne désirais pas plus qu'il épousât *la Reine Louise* que la Reine Isabelle, et qu'il pouvait même être certain que mon fils n'épouserait l'Infante que quand la Reine serait mariée. Lord Aberdeen ajouta : 'Et quand elle aura eu un enfant ?'—'Soit,' repris-je, 'je ne demande pas mieux ; car si la Reine devait rester *stérile*, l'Infante deviendrait l'héritière *nécessaire* ou *inévitable*, et cela ne ferait pas plus mon compte que le vôtre : mais pourtant il faut un peu de réciprocité dans cette affaire, et si je vous donne vos sécurités, il est juste qu'en retour vous me donniez les miennes. Or, les miennes sont que vous ferez ce que vous pourrez pour tâcher que ce soit parmi les descendants de Philippe V. que la Reine Isabelle choisisse son époux, et que la candidature du Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg soit écartée.'—'Soit,' me répondit Lord Aberdeen ; 'nous pensons, comme vous, que le mieux serait que la Reine prît son époux parmi les descendants de Philippe V. Nous ne pouvons pas nous mettre en avant sur cette question, comme vous l'avez fait, mais nous vous laisserons faire ; nous nous bornerons à vous

suivre, et, dans tous les cas, à ne rien faire contre vous. Quant à la candidature du Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg, vous pouvez être tranquille sur ce point; je réponds qu'elle ne sera ni avouée ni appuyée par l'Angleterre, et qu'elle ne vous gênera pas.'

Guizot, à qui je viens de faire lire ce récit, en a reconnu la parfaite exactitude, et je suis sûr du même témoignage de la part de Lord Aberdeen, si je pouvais le lui faire lire également.

Cependant, quelle que soit la loyauté que Lord Aberdeen ait voulu apporter dans la direction de ses agents en Espagne, leur marche ne répondit ni à son attente ni à la nôtre. On eut recours à toutes sortes de moyens pour décolorer la candidature du Comte de Trapani, parcequ'on n'ignorait pas que c'était celle qui avait alors le plus de chances de succès auprès de la Reine Christine et de la Reine sa fille, qui disait sans cesse à ses ministres, 'Quiero Trapani' (je veux Trapani). On représentait ce jeune prince comme un crétin, ce qu'il n'est nullement; comme un être chétif, ce qu'il n'est pas davantage, car il est grand, il a une jolie tournure, il monte à cheval à merveille, et il a même remporté tous les prix d'équitation dans les tournois de Naples; puis on insistait sur sa naissance en Italie, pour faire oublier sa qualité de petit-fils dans la ligne masculine de Philippe V. et de Charles III.; sur son éducation au couvent des Jésuites de Rome, pour le représenter comme bigot, superstitieux, fanatique etc. Ce travail, dirigé par les journaux du parti progressiste, qui, malheureusement, a toujours joui de la faveur des agents Anglais en Espagne, parvint à entourer le pauvre Trapani d'une véritable impopularité. Ce fut alors que, par une étonnante manœuvre sortie du palais de Madrid, on imagina, pour couvrir la transition de la Reine Christine à la candidature du Prince de Cobourg, de déverser sur moi l'impopularité de la candidature de Trapani, en faisant retentir les journaux de l'étonnante absurdité que c'était moi, Louis Philippe, qui avais voulu imposer Trapani aux Reines et à l'Espagne; moi, qui n'avais ni ne pouvais avoir d'autre prédilection pour lui que celle qui résultait de ce que je savais qu'il était celui des descendants de Philippe V. auquel les deux Reines accordaient leur préférence; moi, bien connu, j'ose le dire, pour le soin minutieux avec lequel j'ai constamment veillé à ce que mon gouvernement s'abstînt de toute ingérence quelconque dans les affaires intérieures des autres pays, en Espagne comme en Belgique, comme en Suisse, comme partout·

moi enfin, qui ai brisé le ministère de Thiers, en 1836, pour arrêter l'invasion imminente des armées Françaises en Espagne ! Il est vraiment surprenant qu'en face de tant de faits, de tant de preuves de mon respect pour l'indépendance de tous les États et de tous les gouvernements, j'aie été exposé à voire reproduire cette accusation dirigée contre moi personnellement dans l'article récemment publié dans le *Times*, avec le titre, en grosses lettres, de *French Dictation in Spain.*

Toutes ces manœuvres amenèrent la démarche à laquelle la Reine Christine se laissa entraîner, en expédiant un agent secret porteur d'une lettre d'elle pour le Duc de Cobourg, à l'effet de lui demander la main de son cousin le Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg pour la Reine sa fille. La loyauté de Lord Aberdeen le porta à nous donner immédiatement connaissance de cette démarche, qui nous avait été cachée à Madrid, et il y ajouta l'assurance que ni la Reine Victoria, ni le Prince Albert, ni le gouvernement de sa Majesté ne donneraient ni appui, ni encouragement quelconque à la demande de la Reine Christine. Nous lui représentâmes que, d'après ce qui s'était passé entre nous sur ce chapitre, nous avions droit de réclamer de lui une répression plus positive de la part que des agents Anglais avaient prise aux intrigues qui avaient amené cette démarche de la Reine Christine ; et en effet, Lord Aberdeen adressa une sévère réprimande à M. Bulwer, qui fut sur le point, dit-on, de donner sa démission ; mais néanmoins il resta à Madrid.

Tel était l'état des choses, lorsque Lord Aberdeen quitta le ministère, et y fut remplacé par Lord Palmerston. Peu après son installation au *Foreign Office*, Lord Palmerston communiqua au Comte de Jarnac la nouvelle instruction qu'il avait adressée à M. Bulwer sur les affaires d'Espagne, et qui était déjà expédiée depuis plusieurs jours, sans qu'on eût jugé à propos de nous en donner connaissance préalable, procédé qui n'était guère conforme à notre entente cordiale, et à ce à quoi nous étions habitués par nos rapports de confiance réciproque avec Lord Aberdeen. Dans cette instruction, Lord Palmerston limitait à trois les Princes dont l'Angleterre admettait la candidature à la main de la Reine d'Espagne Isabelle II., savoir,

1. Le Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg ;
2. Don François d'Assise, Duc de Cadix ;
3. Don Enrique, Duc de Séville.

En voyant le nom du Prince de Cobourg placé sur cette liste, et placé en tête, en première ligne, le Comte de Jarnac en fut stupéfait. Il dit à Lord Palmerston que c'était contraire aux assurances que Lord Aberdeen avait constamment données, et qu'il demandait que cette candidature fût retranchée de la liste. Lord Palmerston répondit que cela serait impossible de toutes manières, puisque l'instruction était déjà partie; que d'ailleurs cette mesure ayant été adoptée dans le Cabinet, il ne pouvait plus y faire de changements à lui seul, et qu'il ne se sentait pas disposé à en proposer aucun au Cabinet.

Le reste de l'instruction ne pouvait pas nous paraître plus satisfaisant. Elle était sur un tout autre ton et dans une direction très-différente de celles de Lord Aberdeen. Il n'y avait ni indice, ni recommandation de bon accord entre nous; et la tendance de toute l'instruction était d'assurer le concours et l'appui de l'Angleterre à ce parti progressiste, qui n'est au fond, du moins à mes yeux, que le même *parti révolutionnaire* dont l'ascendant a produit en Espagne tant de déplorables événements, soit dans les affaires de la Granja, soit en soumettant et abandonnant la jeune Reine au joug de la régence d'Espartero.

De semblables instructions devaient faire craindre le renouvellement de ces scènes désastreuses; et, en effet, elles répandirent l'alarme dans le palais de Madrid aussitôt qu'elles y furent connues. Il y eut un revirement immédiat, la Reine Christine en tête de ceux-là mêmes qui l'avaient entraînée à faire la proposition au Duc de Cobourg, et tous, craignant déjà le renouvellement de l'insurrection progressiste récemment terminée en Galice, et qui avait donné lieu à l'expulsion de Don Enrique, se tournèrent vers nous, en demandant de faire immédiatement et simultanément les deux mariages de la Reine avec Don François d'Assise et de l'Infante avec Montpensier. Cette simultanéité était non-seulement le *sine quâ non* de la Reine Christine pour accepter Don François d'Assise, qu'elle n'avait pas désiré jusqu'alors, mais le vœu du ministère et de tous les Espagnols qui regardaient la prompte conclusion des deux mariages comme le seul moyen de mettre un terme aux incertitudes sur lesquelles se fondaient les espérances des hommes qui préparaient de nouvelles insurrections.

En voyant ce revirement soudain, les agents Anglais, plus d'un mois après les instructions de Lord Palmerston, qui avaient

admis la candidature du Prince Léopold de Cobourg, s'efforcèrent de faire prévaloir la candidature de Don Enrique. Rien ne pouvait être plus intempestif, puisqu'il n'était que trop notoire que Don Enrique était le chef, ou plutôt l'agent de toutes les nuances de révolutionnaires, et Lord Palmerston a achevé de le rendre tout à fait impossible, en recommandant sa candidature dans des documents officiels.

Il est, je crois, incontestablement évident, par ce long exposé, que, du côté de l'Angleterre, on ne s'est pas du tout maintenu sur la ligne dont on était convenu avec moi; qu'on a positivement accepté la candidature du Prince Léopold de Cobourg, en la plaçant en tête de celles auxquelles le gouvernement Anglais ne faisait aucune objection; qu'on a ainsi rendu probables, et même imminentes, des combinaisons absolument contraires à celles dans lesquelles nous étions tombés d'accord de nous renfermer; et qu'on m'a ainsi mis en droit et placé dans la nécessité d'user de ma liberté pour échapper à ces combinaisons, comme mon gouvernement avait toujours annoncé qu'il le ferait, s'il y était réduit. Ce n'est donc point moi qui ai pris l'initiative et donné l'exemple de la déviation de nos conventions premières. Je n'ai fait que subir la nécessité de cette déviation commencée ailleurs, et contre mon attente.

Cela posé, je vais dire nettement en quoi consiste la déviation de mon côté. Elle consiste en ce que j'aurais conclu et fait le mariage du Duc de Montpensier, non pas avant le mariage de la Reine d'Espagne, car elle sera mariée au Duc de Cadix au moment où mon fils sera marié à l'Infante, mais avant que la Reine ait eu un enfant. Voilà toute la déviation, rien de plus, rien de moins. Je veux maintenant l'apprécier à sa juste valeur, en entrant dans des détails que tu feras connaître, comme tu pourras, à la Reine Victoria; car je les crois utiles à la complète élucidation de l'affaire, et on ne se laisse pas arrêter par de petits ménagements, quand, après une vie comme la mienne, on se trouve, pour la première fois, exposé au soupçon, ou même à l'accusation *d'avoir manqué de parole.*

Je l'ai dit plus haut, et c'est un fait notoire, il n'a tenu qu'à moi, que mon fils, soit Aumale, soit Montpensier, épousât la Reine d'Espagne; je ne l'ai pas voulu, et j'ai su résister à toutes les instances dont j'ai été entouré pour m'y faire consentir. Ainsi, en désirant, comme je l'ai toujours fait, que mon fils

épousât l'Infante, parceque cette alliance de famille me convenait sous tous les rapports, et qu'elle convenait également à la Reine et à tous les miens, je ne voulais la contracter qu'autant que l'Infante ne deviendrait pas *nécessairement* la Reine d'Espagne, et je voulais me donner à cet égard autant de garanties que le comportaient la situation rapprochée du trône où se trouvait l'Infante, et les incertitudes de la vie humaine. Lord Aberdeen se montrait satisfait de cette disposition; mais il voulait une garantie contre la possibilité de la *stérilité* de la Reine: et comme cela entrait également dans mes vues, cela n'éprouva pas d'objection de ma part. Cependant, en y adhérant, je devais considérer comme entendu qu'il n'y aurait plus d'objections de la part de l'Angleterre, ni de ses agents, à ce que mon fils épousât l'Infante; et il n'est que trop notoire qu'il y en a eu par anticipation, de toutes les couleurs, de tous les degrés.

En Septembre, 1845, lorsque Lord Aberdeen me parla pour la première fois au Château d'Eu du mariage de Montpensier avec l'Infante, la Reine Isabelle II., quoique âgée de quinze ans moins un mois, n'était pas encore *nubile*, et je puis dire en toute *sincérité*, que tant que cet état de santé de la Reine aurait duré, il aurait formé pour moi, même sans mes pourparlers avec Lord Aberdeen, un obstacle absolu à ce que le Duc de Montpensier épousât l'Infante sa sœur. Mais la Reine étant devenue *nubile* dans le courant de l'hiver, et se trouvant, selon les assurances qui nous en ont été données, dans la meilleure condition de nubilité, cet obstacle disparaissait, et il ne restait plus qu'à savoir si l'époux qu'elle choisissait présentait lui-même une bonne condition de *virilité*. Il me paraît certain, d'après les informations, même très-minutieuses, qui ont été recueillies à Madrid sur Don François d'Assise, qu'il se trouve dans cette condition, et que par conséquent toutes les probabilités se réunissent pour faire espérer que leur mariage aura lignée. La différence entre se contenter de la célébration du mariage de la Reine avec Don François d'Assise pour célébrer celui du Duc de Montpensier, ou attendre la naissance de leur premier enfant, se réduit donc à ce qu'il y ait *deux vies au lieu d'une seule* entre l'Infante et la succession au trône.

Néanmoins je puis dire, et encore en toute sincérité, que j'aurais préféré attendre cette naissance, s'il ne m'avait été démontré que ce délai aurait pour conséquence de faire manquer